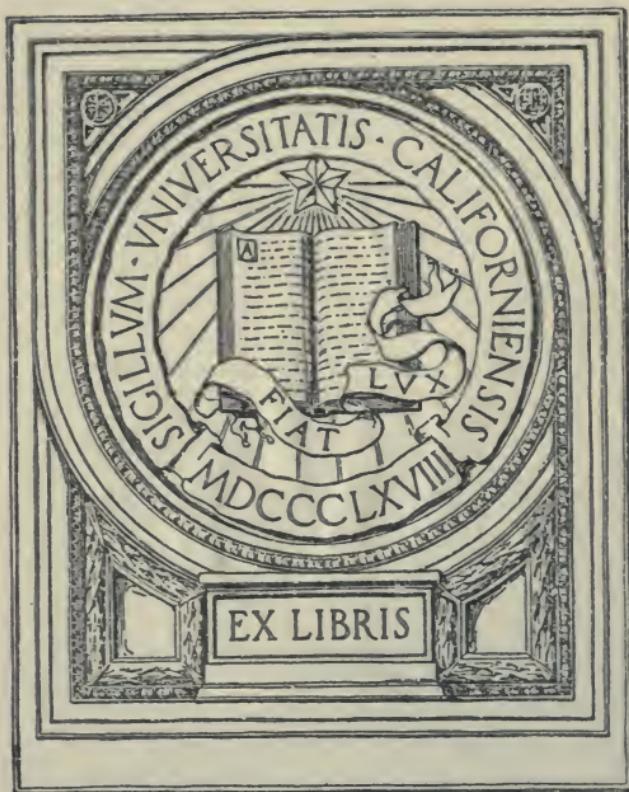


# A THREE-FOOT STOOL

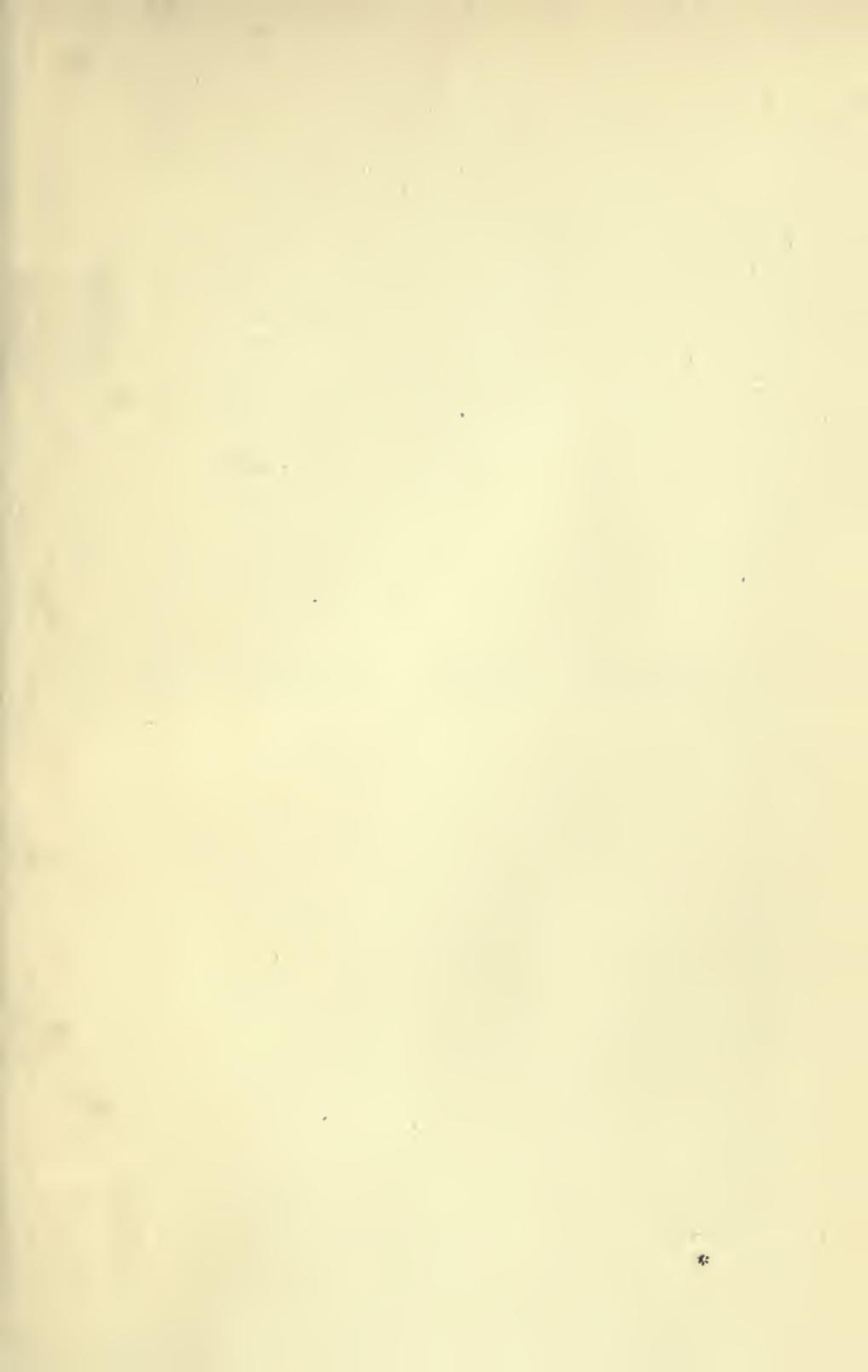
PETER WRIGHT



BANCROFT LIBRARY

This Book is supplied by MESSRS. SMITH,  
ELDER & CO. to Booksellers on terms which will  
not admit of their allowing a discount from the  
advertised price.







Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2007 with funding from  
Microsoft Corporation

## A THREE-FOOT STOOL



# A THREE-FOOT STOOL

BY

PETER WRIGHT

*"When on my three-foot stool I sit and tell  
the . . . feats I have done."*

CYMBELINE.

LONDON  
SMITH, ELDER, & CO., 15 WATERLOO PLACE  
1909

[All rights reserved]

Printed by BALLANTYNE, HANSON & Co.  
At the Ballantyne Press, Edinburgh

8107  
Bancroft Library

INSCRIBED TO

A. L. SMITH



# A THREE-FOOT STOOL

## CHAPTER I

“ The midnight breeze that haunts the plain  
Now cools my horse’s flanks ;  
The wearied cattle now have lain,  
In close and darkened ranks,  
Their huddled bodies on the ground.  
Around the sleeping herd  
We keep our slow monotonous round ;  
Hushed is the air, unstirred  
Save where the puncher’s tuneful cry,  
Also on guard with me,  
Tells the wild creatures they may lie  
In full security,  
And where the creek keeps its soft song,  
Unheard in the fierce heat  
That from the sun all the day long  
On the burnt plains did beat.

The moon in highest heaven does ride.  
Her palace gates that smoothly glide,  
Her ivory gates, are opened wide  
In stately sort.  
The stars that fill the silent night  
Draw nearer to her palace bright,  
Their silv’ry urns to fill with light  
In her high Court.

## A THREE-FOOT STOOL

The camp-fire is almost dead.  
Only the fainter glow  
Of crumbling embers, burning red,  
Its shadowy light does throw  
On muffled men, who on the ground  
Are stretched in many ways ;  
They in an iron sleep are bound,  
The gift of arduous days.  
A motionless and faithful band,  
Close to their masters' beds,  
The little ready ponies stand,  
Drooping their patient heads.

The moon has dropped. The endless plain  
Has sunk in blackness yet again.  
The darkness spreads like a broad main,  
An unplumbed sea.  
A still more dark, oblivious pall  
Will on those sleeping figures fall ;  
Th' impenetrable night will call  
Both them and me.

To-morrow in the icy dawn  
Our saddles we will throw  
On horses fresh, ere day is born  
Or things their colour show.  
Again the whirling clouds that rise  
Around the surging steers  
Will fill with dust our aching eyes  
And make them smart to tears.  
And on, and on, and on, and on,  
We'll press each tired beast  
Till even Twilight shall have gone  
To her house in the East.  
Again the noontide's javelin rays  
Upon us will be bent,  
Another day of many days  
In heat and labour spent.

His golden sword the sun has drawn,  
Rising to journey at the dawn.  
The splendour of his arms is borne  
    Afar on high,  
And as he marches glad and fleet,  
The sands beneath his shining feet  
Are warm and bright to where they meet  
    The cloudless sky."

CATTLE-RANCHING is not an invention of the white man. It is in its origin Mexican, and is an ingenious solution of a very difficult problem—profitable cattle-farming. Or it is perhaps giving too much credit to an incapable race to call it a solution, which implies the deliberate application of a thinking mind. It is the result of a few simple conditions, a continent of waving grassy plains, a race with a strong aversion to anything as arduous as agriculture, and absence of capital. To turn cattle loose to breed in this unenclosed country, and to handle the animals, that had almost relapsed into their original wildness, on horseback, was a simple proceeding. A business that was partly farming and partly hunting was suited to the genius of the Mexican, partly white and partly Indian. In Europe almost at all times land has been too valuable, and agriculture too far advanced for such a grand and careless system, and the farm has always been too small, the stock too carefully tended. But nothing here is a discovery of Texan or Mexican genius. The system is the result, the almost inevitable result, of certain conditions, and it is found wherever those conditions prevail, as, for example, it existed

in Ireland three centuries ago. Irish ranching would be as obscure as it deserves to be if the poet Spenser had not taken to it, hoping to "strike it rich" in Cork as he had hoped to do at Elizabeth's Court. Writing was to him, as it is to so many poets, not an effort but a relief, and in the leisure of his dangerous and tedious life he found vent for his own exuberant facility, his vast and gorgeous vocabulary, and his inexhaustible literary impressions in his "View of the Present State of Ireland." He describes the Bolies, wandering herds, pasturing upon waste wild places, and removing still to fresh lands as they depastured the former, driving their cattle continually with them ; a race who steal, and are cruel and bloody, full of revenge and delighting in deadly execution, licentious swearers and blasphemers, lawless and rake-hell horseboys, growing up in knavery and villainy, who will never afterwards fall to labour, but are only made fit for the halter : very valiant and hardy, for the most part great endurers of cold, labour, hunger, and of all hardness, very active and strong of hand, very vigilant and circumspect in their enterprises, very present in perils, very great scorers of death ; so that great warriors said that, in all the services which they had seen abroad in foreign countries, they never saw a more comely horseman than the Irishman.

These are the very words of Spenser. His dreams of wealth were as much a mirage in Cork as in Whitehall. He was a disappointed man, living besides among enemies. He was no friend

of his uncouth Irish neighbours ; rapacious, he was hated by them in his quadruple capacity of an intruder, an Englishman, a land-grabber, and a man of culture. He despised them as an artist whose intense susceptibilities were shocked by their brutality, and as a frontiersman whose fortune they had frustrated. He had used his rapier on those savages, and there is no more splendid or more vivid, accurate imagery in the "Faerie Queene" than that used to describe the gush and flow of man's blood. They burnt his ranch over his head, and broke his heart. So this description of the Ireland of the Tudors is heightened by the bitterness of the writer. But, after making allowance for his acrimony, are they not almost exactly applicable to the Texas of the '70's ?

It is still at the present day in the United States of Mexico that the model of the ranch is found, where the area is measured by scores of miles and the increase by tens of thousands of calves, and where owners live in paternal simplicity and state. As it is in the State of Chihuahua to-day, so it was in Texas, then undetached from Mexico, when the Southerners began to filter into it. They immediately adopted the system, and an etymologist could detect its origin by an examination of the cowpuncher's vocabulary, which is studded with Spanish words. It is especially the characteristic and peculiar words of his trade that come from that source. Their mere recital is a rough picture of Mexican life : the ranch-house with its circus-shaped yard, the *corral*; the *remuda*,

the remounts, the troop of spare horses—and their tackle; the *lasso*, the rope with the running noose; the *haquima*, the improvised rope halter; the *sombrero*, the vast Mexican hat; the *chaparros*, the leather leggings; the *tapaderos*, leather foot-guards. None of this vocabulary is of American origin, nor are the topographical names: the *canyon*, the funnel-shaped gorge; the *arroyo*, the water-course, which is a rudimentary canyon; the *mesa*, the smooth rolling down; the *sieneca*, the grassy hollow, and their inhabitants; *broncho*, the wild horses; *burro*, the donkey; and *lobo*, the huge timber-wolf—all these names make up, as it were, the very landscape of Spanish America. The appearance of the cowpuncher is even more eloquent. He looks, on horseback, neither Saxon nor modern, but carries you back to the Renaissances and Latin civilisation. His type can be found in any of the pictures of the classical Italian painters where horsemen figure, say for example, Ucelli's "Battle of St. Egidio" in the National Gallery. Just like the *condottieri* who are taking Pandolfo Malatesta prisoner, the cowpuncher rides in a heavy and elaborate saddle weighing about forty pounds, rising high at the cantle and the pommel, with vast stirrups and cruel and complicated spurs and bits, and with a straight leg. In Pisano's little picture that exquisite, elegant, and radiant huntsman, St. Hubert, talks to the gnarled old St. Anthony in a sombrero of the same vast circumference, with the same prodigious spurs, and has the same supple, cavalier attitude.

The Southerners who pushed into Texas seized the strong point of the Mexican system of farming, its extraordinary cheapness, and they systematised it. It involved no expenses except wages, food, and horses. The wages were those of unskilled labour; the food required was little else but sugar, salt, and flour; and horses breed as easily as cattle in that grassy country. The grass, though very thin in comparison with our rich green pastures, dries on the stalk, and affords better food of a winter than in summer; it is "self-curing," a winter food supplied by nature. Each of the items of expense, therefore, is low, and there is nothing to be spent on land, fences, fixtures, rolling stock, or crops. The prairie lay in front of them from which they could help themselves. The farmer, that is, the cowman, kept his camp circulating with its farm hands, the cowpunchers, on the common, the "open range," where his stock browsed. There was little to do except vigilantly to put his brand on every calf born of his cows. He kept his own flock as much as he could together, "rounded them up," but they were unavoidably confused with those of his neighbours. His main, his essential task was to fix his distinguishing symbol, his initials or some other mark, his "brand," such as a diamond and a heart, on his younglings. As the increase grew up, he sorted this crop out and sold them. This cheap farming method, the cheapest the modern economic world can ever know, had been pursued by the Mexicans haphazard and at random. For the Mexican is

half Indian, and has the ineradicable waywardness of the Indian, just as he has his superb physical skill. The Texans followed it with deliberate care and regularity. It was a time, too, when Britain and industrial America found themselves unable to supply their growing urban population with the meat their carnivorous tastes required, so the demand for cheap cattle was insatiable. From the Civil War onwards these nomad cattlemen spread from Texas all over the centre of the continent. The advance of these migratory farmers, armed with rifles and revolvers, into the wilderness and savagery was not unheroic. The cowboy caught popular imagination and drew some of the golden light of romance on his dishevelled person. Certainly the earlier pioneers were not altogether undeserving of it, and some of their halo still rests on their rather degenerate successors.

Their work is considerable. By invading the central portion of the continent they united two nations, the Americans of the Atlantic and the Americans of the Pacific coast. It was originally for their convenience that the great transcontinental railroads were built which finally bound together in their hoops of steel those various peoples and countries, the Yankees of the North, the distant Californians, the dwellers by the Mississippi and in the South. They dispossessed the Red Indian, no puny adversary, desperately defending his last ground. The inherent nullity of the central government in the

States—which are always States, and not a single State, with the common weakness of a confederacy at the centre—left them almost unassisted in their work. Its interference, such as it was, was too vacillating to protect either the Indian or the white man. They were almost discoverers. The wide, unexplored ocean of pasture lay always in front of them, unbroken plains as in Texas itself, or still more unknown, the lovely and enchanted woods of the Rockies. Discoveries of gold drew at times wild rushes of people, fired with the hope of fortune, to certain famous spots; but the regular, unintermittent advance was made by the cattlemen, making known the blank spaces of the map. It was a rapid and continuous process. From the edge of the occupied country one wave after another went out. Parties of two or three of them would push into new regions to find sheltered valleys and deep grass and flowing water. Returning to their herds which they had left on the edge of civilisation, they would graze them along leisurely into the new lands. At some favourable spot they halted. With their axes they cleared an open space, where a stream ran constantly to supply them with fresh water. A low house of hewn logs was erected, and round the clearance a fence of heavy posts and bars; and so a new ranch had been formed.

It took barely two decades for this great tide, assisted at times by the still more powerful current of gold-seekers, to sweep all over the plains and into the remotest canyon of the Rocky Mountains.

The horse Indians of the plains, and the still more cruel and savage Indians of the Rockies, did not surrender their hunting-grounds without a struggle; and in that long guerilla, the whites, always more determined and intrepid than their opponents, grew as wary and as cunning, and as ruthless. Till the end of the '80's the range was always worked under the imminent danger of an Apache raid, sudden, swift, and cruel. Few parts of the Rockies have not turf graves and burnt huts and ravaged homesteads, and tales of fiendish torture; while the complete disappearance of the Red Indian from a country which within this generation was his undisputed territory proves the thoroughness of the revenge. Even more deadly were the fights with cattle-thieves. For many reasons the application of the law is often interrupted in the States, but on the frontier it had not even a nominal existence. Where it had, the fantastic institutions of the States, where every office from that of President to constable is elective, and which would be unworkable without the powerful parasitical institutions of the party machines and their bosses, led to even stranger results. The cattle "rustlers" (thieves) would sometimes elect all the officers and Magistrates of the Peace in a county from the *élite* of their own class, a situation not unknown, even in our own days, in certain big towns. Before the railroads were built, and when the herds were still driven ("punched," hence the name "cowpuncher") across the continent to the markets, the official position of the rustlers in such a county was of peculiar assist-

ance to them in levying a toll on all steer outfits passing through their domain, as these brigands, if they were strong enough to carry it off, could have their victims duly arrested by their own sheriffs, and legally condemned by their own judges. This was to do things on a grand scale, with the candour of an unsophisticated age. There were more furtive methods, an infinite variety of them in a vast, uninhabited country. A beast belongs to the man whose brand he bears. Put your brand on an unbranded calf and it becomes yours. It is easy to see the use that could be made of this rule, and its practical corollary. A cattle-rustler, ostensibly engaged in honest ranching, can prey upon his neighbours. Unobserved, he can regularly rope and brand every *maverick* (unbranded calf) he comes across, without regard to the brand borne by its mother. He can have confederates in the employment of his neighbours doing the same for him. Some of their devices were curious enough. Of course, there is always one risk of detection that must be guarded against; a calf does not leave its parent till it is pretty big, and a calf with one brand sucking a cow with another brand invites suspicion. The rustler must separate calves from their parents till they are weaned, usually by imprisoning them in a corral. In secret canyons, remote and unknown, the curious cowpuncher, riding alone, finds the ruins of vast corrals built by the cattle-thieves in the old days. Another cruel way was to burn the soles of the little calf's feet with a hot branding-iron and drive the mother away so that the little

beast was too sore-footed to follow her. The petty pilferer could always slaughter animals and sell the meat in some neighbouring mining camp or settlement, sure that the wolves and foxes would clean up the trace of his murder in a night or two. So small owners would settle near big ones and plunder them, and big owners oppress their small neighbours. It was a time, too, when prices ruled for cattle that made it possible to accumulate a fortune in a few years, a circumstance that aggravated both the fury of the victim and the audacity of the wrongdoer. The ferocity of the feuds between these enemies was unimaginable, and was the real and constant peril of the occupation, as it is perhaps even nowadays, to a certain small degree. The big cattlemen hired bravos to exterminate their parasitical neighbours, and the small cattlemen ambushed their oppressors, or they would form leagues, as they have done quite lately, and wage regular war. The Southerners transplanted their hereditary feuds, which flourished luxuriantly in this air, like the famous Sutton-Manners feud, which involved Western Texas in something like a civil war.

To the risks of "range work" on the ranch were added those of the romantic "trail work"—driving a large herd half-way across the continent, as it was necessary to do before the railroads were made, to take them to Kansas City. An "outfit"—a company of cowpunchers and their foreman—would take delivery of a few thousand cattle on the Mexican frontier and slowly drive them, grazing, northwards till they reached their destination, an

expedition across the plains sometimes lasting six months. Except for a few landmarks familiar to the captain of the drive, the country they traversed was unknown to them. They were exposed to the blackmail of predatory Indians and professional cattle-thieves, against whom they relied on themselves alone. To these half-dozen or dozen men several thousands of cattle would be committed, half wild animals, suspicious, excitable, savage, always in need of vigilance and tact. They had to swim this reluctant herd across the large, dangerous rivers of the plains ; when they met strips of the desert to push them, maddened and almost blind with thirst, to the next pools ; and to spend every night under the imminence of a stampede.

It may be doubtful whether, even under these circumstances, cowboys ever rose to the true chivalrous height. It is difficult to see how men who have been deprived of any other aim from boyhood to manhood than to increase their wages from £1 to £2 a week can ever do so. Commercial honesty and sincere family affection flourish at that level of life as much as elsewhere, but not a delicate sense of personal honour, distinction of character, the trained instincts of the gentleman, regard for the feelings of others, humanity and gentleness, and generosity and magnanimity. It is not there that these virtues live and grow aloft. Set from boyhood to menial and mechanical tasks, surrounded by sordid and ugly things and boorish and base people, confined and cramped by a miserably narrow horizon, unversed in books and un-

thinking, hardened by too early a contact with the rigours of life, condemned to arduous and incessant labour, and restricted to coarse and sensational pleasures, the innumerable and unlucky poor do not produce these finer and more delicate qualities. It is only among the small class of the rich that they bloom, among those who from the first moment are placed in the light and the sun, on whom enormous care is expended from babyhood, for whom a long train of attendants always will slave to dispense from discomfort and illness and subordinate work, who enjoy as of right leisure and fine food and absence of pecuniary cares and the deference of inferiors and the company of superiors and travel and the gratification of their tastes. From these advantages, and the moral fruit they bear, the poor are for ever debarred, and none know it better than they ; and if determination, or luck, or ability lifts one of them, they reach these advantages too late in life. Their characters and minds are then fixed. Nothing can compensate them for the original injustice.

Still in the old days the character of these pioneers must have been remarkable and exceptional. The cattle business required almost heroic courage, and all its train of qualities, patience, energy, endurance, fortitude, judgment. The very degraded position of cowherd was transformed, and its occupant almost transfigured. The popular instinct which glorified the cowboy was thus in a measure justified. Such a history of individual achievement, a class of men of such a strong

temper, is rare, perhaps only our African and Arctic explorers can be compared to them, but this group is, after all, small. In American history, with its uninterrupted record of boundless material prosperity, which is rather sordid, and violent party strife, which is rather futile, the conquest of the West is a splendid chapter. The popular instinct is here more true than the professional historians who, bookish and sedentary men, have neglected and are not qualified to appreciate and record feats and characters of this kind. The chapter has unfortunately been written by novelists and journalists, who have imported into it the conventions and falsities and sensationalism of popular fiction.

The conditions of the open range are still singular and special, very different from those of the ordinary cattle-farm. But though the business is still invested with a superior interest, and adventure and sport and some danger enter into it, it is very changed at the present day, and the safety of those working in it is very different. The Indians are now confined to their reservations, guarded, controlled, dwindling. Sometimes, of course, the young bucks slip away of a winter and go hunting in their old grounds. Noiseless and invisible, they move about the woods. Their rifles, the report of which would betray them, are discarded, and they hunt with the bow and arrow. Only the lonely cowpuncher following horse-trails sees in the snow the unmistakable and uncanny Apache sign, the footprints set one in front of the

other in a straight line. Sometimes, either in fun or anger, they plant their arrows in a ranchman's cattle, or kill his beef and scatter it as a challenge on the trails that lead to his ranch. But at worst they are little more than nuisances, as the following story shows.

Two Indians had been out on such an expedition with the object of stealing horses and mules. Several innocent people had suffered. Prospectors and hunters had found their saddle stock driven off at night, and been compelled to trudge home with their packs on their back. Mexican shepherds, watching the ground with ceaseless care around their flocks, found their sign and followed it, but not far. For Apaches are as skilful in confusing sign as in reading it. On stony ground their trail will disappear altogether. They leap from rock to rock, leaving no traces. Or to leave their numbers unknown, they will move each treading in the footsteps of the one in front, in Indian file in fact. Cowpunchers had found exhausted ponies in the woods shod with raw hide, or with their hoofs worn down till they could hardly walk. At last the Apaches were injudicious enough to steal some mules off some enterprising ranchmen, who took up and followed the trail of the mules, and surprised the thieves in their little camp. These barely escaped, and owed their lives to their adroitness in dodging behind the trees, while the ranchmen took shots at them in their flight. Besides the three stolen mules twelve other head were recovered, the net proceeds of the raid.

The ranchmen were exultant and enjoyed in anticipation the glory of their return home. They had impressive spoils to carry back, bundles of neat little Indian arrows, buckskin and raw hide, and best of all, an entire bunch of horses. These would make an appropriate background to the thrilling account of an Indian fight. As they squatted round the fire after supper they rehearsed the story of the adventure, and each contributed to the version of the other some vivid, telling detail. Their own outfit had been of nine horses, and the entire bunch of twenty-four were turned loose to graze for the night; to the neck of the leader of this band, as usual, a bell was attached, the tinkle of which would make it easy to find them next morning.

In the night the two Apaches stole back; one drove away at full speed through the night all the animals except one mount, which he left with the other; this other stayed close to the camp, keeping in his hand the leader's bell, which at regular intervals he tinkled.

In the morning the ranchmen woke up. Evidently the horses were close to camp, for they could hear the leader's bell tinkling as he moved about grazing. They therefore determined not to trouble to fetch them till they had had some breakfast. The sun was high and warm when they set out leisurely to drive them into camp, only to see the Apache vanishing with his bell at full gallop through the woods. Shamefaced and wearied, they had to walk many miles home in their high-heeled

boots and carrying their saddles and Winchesters, to be consoled for their misadventure by the inexorable derision of their friends.

Other risks have disappeared too. The business man has come to set up his indispensable machine, the law. It works pretty well. There is no more brigandage except according to the regular rules of business. Where firearms are always carried, killings must still occur: but they may not be carried in town, and the enforcement of the law to that effect makes a Western town quite safe; safer, indeed, than in the large capitals of that joyfully anarchical country, by the action of whose strange political system an outlaw, as in Milwaukee, can become head of the police. The carnival frolics of old times are obsolete. No longer does a cowpuncher, merry with whisky, ride his horse into a saloon and rope the bar-tender; or shoot the lights out of a dancing-hall; or with revolver bullets playfully knock the heels off the boots of a commercial traveller; or hold up a Chinese restaurant in fun. Out of town, where guns are carried, there is no alcohol to be got. Coarse and brutal men cannot be expected to stand the often intolerable strain of cow-work without outbursts of wrath. But they do not, when sober, go further than verbal threats of "shooting the son of a gun plumb between the eyes." If killing a Mexican is still a peccadillo, they know the United States marshals will hunt them all over the continent if they, without good reason, shoot a white man.

The "Long Trail" work has disappeared too. Railways now carry the cattle from South and West to the North, and the iron network gets closer every year. There are still, however, long drives to be made, but they last only days, not weeks and months. The circumstances are here easy; the trail is short and familiar and friendly. Even these few days of grinding toil and anxious nights, however, are severe work. Before the east has grown grey, horses are saddled by the light of the camp-fire. Without halt or change, the day of glare and dust is spent in pushing on the long train of sore-footed and reluctant animals. At dark, after a day of aching labour, the task is not over. These wild creatures, who have never been in a herd before, must be guarded. Great fires must be kept alight to reassure them. Guards must ride round them incessantly talking or singing to them. If the weather is dark and rainy they will not stop on their beds but begin drifting, and those who have been riding all day must ride all night to hold them. Or suddenly, for some occult reason, the unguessed proximity of a mountain lion, or even a horse shivering, they will, with electric rapidity, rise together and thunder away stampeding in the dark. If the blind mass of charging brutes take your direction you must ride for your life in the dark. This kind of experience, continued over a period of months, must have been a great school of patience and endurance.

Finally the open range itself, with the absence of enclosures which is the distinguishing peculiarity

of ranching and from which all its characteristics flow, is disappearing too. The barbed-wire fences are creeping up upon it everywhere, and in another decade it will be almost unknown. As the constant process of subdividing the ranches goes on, the ranch itself diminishes and sinks into a farm. With the open range the cowpuncher will vanish : he reverts, after his brilliant flight, to the grub condition of herd. Enclosed land and separate ownership, in spite of the expense of fence-building and maintenance and every other improvement, becomes the only satisfactory system, as soon as all the good land is occupied ; the open range could only be transitory and temporary. The enjoyment of the land must be exclusive, especially in countries where water is scanty and grass is very, incredibly spare. You may cross a good cattle country for miles without seeing any kine, and the proper allowance is thirty or forty acres to the head. If it is not exclusive, after the pioneer has confronted the dangers and overcome the difficulties, other men will press into the country with fresh herds and overstock it. These intruders would ruin the original occupier. In a dry hot country the effects of overstocking pass belief ; the destructive powers of cows far surpass the feeble powers of man. They eat off the grass, always very thin, and trample the roots till it dies. Grassy stretches become a barren wilderness. Then, as there is no turf to retain the rain water, it drains off the ground as soon as it falls. One consequence of this is that the trees, unsustained by continual

moisture and only occasionally soaked, die off. Another consequence is that the rivers, instead of being gentle and perpetual streams, are either high dangerous torrents after rain, or broad beds of stones in dry weather. In a few years cows could turn Eden and all its verdure into a salt and dry desert. From these disastrous encroachments the barbed-wire fence is a protection. It also hampers, if not ruins, the professional cattle-thief. He does not get an opportunity of putting his brand on other cattlemen's calves. It excludes that arch-enemy, the sheepman. His innocent flock are the dread and terror of the cattlemen. Omnivorous and ubiquitous, they shave the barren country clean of all its food. A sheep does not browse carelessly, or capriciously, like other beasts ; he eats rapidly, systematically, and closely. Not only so, but he leaves an odour on the ground so that no other animal will feed there. An indignant cattleman will find a whole stretch of his range denuded by a passing flock, and the cattle fled from the country looking for unsoiled herbage. All these advantages given by the barbed wire are fatal to the open range ; the squat, ugly fences have covered the plains and are invading the mountains. As the ranch sinks into a mere cattle-farm, the cowpuncher too degenerates, and returns to his abject condition of farm labourer, from which he emerged for a short time. This retrogression, of course, has only gone a certain distance and will not be completed for many years. There are huge spaces of open range, and many of the enclosed ranches are

as big as a small English county. The cattle spread over this large area must be tended, and can only be tended on horseback; the country is wild and deserted. The cattle are often as wild as the game, and to control them hard riding is required. Among the game there are dangerous animals, and the character of your neighbours is often dubious. Firearms are still carried. The only roof to be found is that of the rough ranch-house, and life is spent under the sky by day, and by night round the camp-fire. The world is distant and its noise faint and occasional. This is the life of the cowpuncher, which draws to it those who feel pent and chafed by urban and sedentary life, and who prefer the monotony of the wilderness and the saddle to that of the street and the office-stool.

## CHAPTER II

"The rains with drowsy patter beat  
Upon the roofs ; in the wet street  
They turn each rut into a rill,  
And pools with thousand dimples fill.  
Drop by drop from down the eaves  
They ticking fall : the rustling leaves  
Drizzle their burden on the mould.  
The cheerless air is drear and cold,  
But every sight and every sound  
Reminds me now of English ground."

JOE, the cook, sat by the fireplace of the front room with his boots on the chimneypiece, wearing his spurs. All day a deluge of rain had been pouring, and had swollen the creek that emptied itself into the Gila till its angry murmur could be heard at the Diamond Heart Ranch. Joe was reading a book, and I had just come in from riding. The door that led straight into the room from the downpour suddenly opened, and the foreman and a second cowpuncher came in, whom we expected out from town. They had been riding all day, and the water streamed from the broad brims of their sombreros; without a word they drew off their dank gloves and knelt next to me by the fire. They were left ungreeted by Joe, who, without shifting his position, surveyed us and our clothes steeped in water. He remarked—

"Hell, is it raining?"

The second cowpuncher answered—

"I guess it will be soon."

He and the foreman had been riding the whole of a short winter day out from town, saddling by the light of a lantern in the morning, and only reaching the ranch when night had begun to spread its dark wings. According to their custom, they had taken no food with them. Hungry, and numb with the insensibility of extreme fatigue, we remained kneeling in silence before the huge fireplace that opened like the mouth of a cavern. Joe rolled off into the kitchen to cook us some food, and we could hear the martial clank of his spurs as he moved about. For he was turned into a cook from being a cowpuncher by staying at home instead of riding out. Two others, Fritz Reinhold, a friend of mine and a visitor at the Diamond Heart's, and Hay, a bear-trapper who was spending the night there on his way through to town, joined us, and we sat down in the dark kitchen to our food.

The menu is invariable for every meal, and any change or improvement would outrage these conservatives. Pieces of beef fried black in fat; "biscuit," that is, small scones, new-made and hot; and black coffee, according to the Texan recipe, strong enough to float steel wedges in; savage food, but with one great merit, not small under those circumstances, that of being very rapidly prepared, and no doubt this is the reason of its adoption by those who, late or pressed, must yet

cook for themselves. Within a few minutes of its being decided to unpack the mules and make a camp, a meal of this kind is ready, and the tastes for this unpalatable food, thus acquired by necessity, become inveterate and exclusive ; the resources of a kitchen, when it is at hand, are disdained and disliked.

When we gathered again round the fire our spirits were better. On the floor of the yawning fireplace logs were piled, glowing and crackling, that threw up columns of flame. The torpor of protracted hunger had disappeared, and the chill damp began to lift from our limbs.

The second cowpuncher was asked if there was any news from Magdalena, from which he had ridden out; and in a matter-of-fact way he told us of a killing. A foreman was trying to get two of his men to leave town for the ranch, it being then about two in the morning. All were drunk, and from dispute they passed to insult. Challenged, the foreman had put down his six-shooter and belt on the sidewalk and fought one of his men with his fists. The other man, Ben, seeing his companion worsted, had seized the foreman's own revolver and began firing at him at random. None of the original combatants had been hurt, but a Mexican who had run up at the sound had received a shot through the heart, and a marshal who had attempted to arrest him another in his throat. The character of these two victims was bad, and the cowpuncher voiced the general satisfaction at their disappearance and at this eminently successful issue to the

fight. We all felt that on this occasion at least the workings of Providence were not inscrutable.

My friend Reinhold, who had listened to this account with the deepest interest, made this comment—

“That Mexican did not have much of a show.”

“Show!” exclaimed the second cowpuncher. “He had no more show than a cat in hell without claws.”

The first cowpuncher had known Ben in his boyhood, and spoke of him—

“That boy Ben was the coolest I ever struck. He and another boy got them a dummy, and used to stick it up outside people’s houses at night, call out, and then get away and hide. Some got scared, some got mad at it, and some shot it. One night they set it down outside an old man’s house. The old man, he comes out and sez, ‘How d’ye do?’ Of course he gets no answer. ‘What do you want?’ he sez; and he don’t get no answer, neither. Then he got hot and shouts, ‘God damn ye, get out; I don’t want no sons of guns like you about the place.’ Finally, he reached behind the door, grabbed a Winchester, and shot. The dummy fell down backwards. The old man walked up to it: he jes’ laughed. ‘Boys,’ he sez, ‘if any of you is round, jes’ walk up. I guess the drinks is on me.’”

The flames burnt high, and the long tongues licked the vaulted top of the fireplace. The cowpuncher saw his audience was amused, and unfolded his story further.

“There was a little bridge over a canyon. One

night they set the dummy on it, and hid below in the canyon. There were thick trees and bushes on both sides of the canyon that made the bridge dark at both ends, and the moon was full, so that the middle of the bridge was in the light. It was summer time, and there had been a camp meeting with hymns and prayers and preaching. They knew a good many folk would come back that way. By and by Ben's brother, Sam, and John Downes comes along, riding. They were riding young horses, and the horses got scared and refused to go past the figure. Sam asked the man in the middle of the bridge to move; the dummy naturally stayed there. After shouting some, Sam got hot and mad, and drew his six-shooter and shot it. As it fell, one of the boys under the bridge cried out—

“‘By God ! I’m killed.’

“Sam and John Downes rode off like bats out of hell. They thought they had killed a man. After a while the rest of the people come along and they sees a body lying in the middle of the bridge. They send for some matches to see who it was. But they never goes near it; they were too frightened the body wasn’t quite dead. While they was getting the matches, the preacher he was praying away at the side of the canyon for the dead man. When the matches come, the preacher goes to the middle of the bridge and looked.

“‘Hell !’ he sez, ‘he’s only a damned dummy.’

“Ben went home and found his brother Sam fixing to leave the country. He made him change

his mind and go hide in the pasture. For three days he kept him out hiding in the brakes, and brought him food, and loaded him with all kinds of tales about the sheriff and his posse. I guess it was Ben who had to leave the country when Sam found out."

He finished his story laughing, and reached for his revolver where it lay on the chimney. He said—

"Sam was sure a good fellow. He gave me this gun."

The grim, compact little instrument of death had a look of deadly and lightning precision. He was proud of its handles with their ugly decoration of mother-of-pearl. It had served him well. While foreman of a ranch in Old Mexico he had dismissed one of the hands, a Mexican. That night he was squatting on one side of the fire, when the cook, who was kneeling on the other side facing him, shouted "Look out!" and pointed to something behind the cowpuncher's back, who, without turning round, pulled his gun and shot over his own shoulder, twisting his head. He had been only just in time. His shot killed the dismissed Mexican, who had crept out with a knife from behind the waggon to stab him. The point of the knife was a few inches from the back of the cowpuncher as he fell. Reinholt asked if he could look at the handles and fingered it curiously.

He was interested in everything, being a traveller, the son of a German sausage-maker of vast wealth who made sausages for all Germany and most of

the civilised world. The father had begun life as a waiter, but in the hours of his leisure had applied himself to the study of chemistry. In a laboratory where he contrived to get the post of assistant, he conducted experiments in the treatment of food-stuffs. He there discovered preparations of which he still retained the patent and exclusive monopoly, by which meat and bone, the refuse of slaughter-houses and knackers' yards, might be given all the rich and delicate flavours of pork. His sausage factories, and the vast hives where his employees lodged, now occupied the area of a small city, and there were few consumers or connoisseurs who did not prefer his pigless pork to the inferior products of the real animal. His riches were great, and his success in life had been recognised in many ways by his grateful countrymen. He had been the subject of a sonnet by the German Emperor, and there were few of the reigning dynasties of Germany who had not borrowed money from him. He had thought it right that his son, destined to be the manager of a business whose branches stretched over the whole civilised world, should receive an education more deep and extensive than he had himself enjoyed. Young Reinhold was now at his fourth university, having taken courses with brilliant success at Göttingen, Paris, and Oxford. His father had wished him to pursue some study in America, and had sent him to take a degree in Pastoral Theology at the University of Amphipolis, Wyoming, U.S.A. His reason for selecting this new and rather unknown foundation for his son,

in preference to the more antique and famous universities like Harvard and Yale, was his personal friendship with the munificent founder and first chancellor of Amphipolis, the great Western banker, Cadwallader K. Jones, whose chain of banks extended from Chicago to San Francisco. He had expected this friendship would be useful to his son, but his hopes had been disappointed. Reinhold had never been able even to make the acquaintance of the great financier, who was at that moment purging a term of three years' penal servitude in the penitentiary of Denver for an infringement of the banking laws of the State of Colorado ; but he had penetrated deeply into the study of Pastoral Theology, and was taking a holiday in the Rockies before returning to the management of the sausage business. I had met him at Oxford, where our acquaintance had begun by my being carried back from another college to Balliol one evening by Reinhold and a German friend of his, who had the muscles of trained gymnasts, from a meeting of an advanced political and philosophical society to which I belonged. Subsequently I became less insensible to his kindness than on our first meeting, and we had become friends. I had come across him again in the famous slaughter-houses of Chicago, where he was inspecting with curiosity the obsolete methods of making pork out of pig.

The cowpuncher's story revived a memory in the mind of the foreman. He said—

" Ben was sure smart. There was a little old

Dutchman who had lost all his money in Texas. One day the Dutchman was making talk in a saloon and he sez—

“‘ You show me a man from Texas and I show you a son of a gun.’

“ Ben was sitting by and had a six-shooter near. He grabs the six-shooter and jumps up and sez—

“‘ Well, I’m from Texas.’

“ The little Dutchman hastily pointed to himself and said—

“‘ Well, I am de son of a gun ! ’ ”

Joe got up and flung a huge log upon the glowing edifices of the smouldering fire. The burning palaces crumbled, and fresh flames flung themselves to attack the new wood. The foreman said to him—

“ You’re making that fire too hot, Joe, it will soon be burning like hell.”

“ I don’t know what hell’s like, I’ve never been there,” answered Joe.

I mentioned that if I had been in Magadalena I could have seen the shooting from the window of the hotel. Hay, the bear-trapper, who with the discretion of an old hand had hitherto kept his peace among strangers, now ventured on a reminiscence—

“ I have only seen one shooting, and that was by Darnel. You remember Darnel, don’t you, Jack ? ” he addressed the cowpuncher.

The second cowpuncher answered—

“ I only met him once, rode into Magdalena with him. It was cold, God damn, cold enough

to freeze the tail off a brass monkey. The ground was frozen harder than the hinges of hell."

Hay continued—

"Darnel got spoilt by his popularity after the Spanish War. He thought he could do what he pleased. One day he was drunk and rode his horse into a saloon, roped the bar-tender and dragged him out of the house. The bar-tender was a good fellow and let him go. Then he started to shoot the town up. I was in my room and my landlord rushed up and told me. I was only a kid and had just come out from Missouri ; it was like candy to me. I ran up to the top of the house and saw Darnel coming down the sidewalk. People had heard the shooting and there was no one in streets, except a nigger, on the other side of the road to Darnel, leaning against a tree and eating on a piece of pie. Just as he was putting his big white teeth into it, Darnel shot it away from between his fingers and mouth. The nigger fainted and fell down ; I never saw anything so funny in my life. Then he went into the Chinese restaurant to shoot it up, but Charley, the owner, rushed out of the kitchen with a knife as long as his own pigtail and chased Darnel, six-shooter and all, round and round the town."

The foreman said—

"I knew Darnel's father ; he was a cranky old man ; used to disappear for months and years without warning."

Joe added—

"He was the oddest old man I ever see. One

day he went down to the creek to get some water without his hat. He come back two years afterwards and raised hell because his hat could not be found. Another time there was some Indians camping on the hill behind his house. The old man said he would run 'em off it. He did too—but he was in the lead."

The second cowpuncher asked Hay—

"What become of Darnel? Wasn't he shot?"

"He was killed in cold blood in a saloon at Las Cruces," Hay informed him. "He was shot right between the eyes."

Reinhold asked—

"What had he done?"

"Nothing," Hay answered. "The man jerked his gun; Darnel was standing at the bar and turned his head round and the man shot him right between the eyes."

Reinhold insisted—

"But why did he do it?"

"I dunno," was the answer. "I guess he wanted to see somebody drop. He was just mean."

In the deep warmth of the fire I had fallen into a kind of somnolence. The foreman looked at his big watch and said—

"I think it is time to roost."

Most of us rose, and I lighted my candle and passed down the dark, draughty passage. In my room, under the rafters of hewn logs, I pulled off my boots and fell into the soft blankets. Through the thin partition I could here Joe's voice, who felt cold as he got into bed. He was exclaiming—

"God damn cold storage ! If I owned a ranch I would buy these blankets and use them as a refrigerator in summer."

As I was gliding down the dark stream of sleep I could hear the second cowpuncher analysing the phenomenon of cold to Joe.

He explained—

"In these altitudes the air is so thin it just sifts through the blankets ; that is what makes it so cold in these mountains."

## CHAPTER III

DURING a few days there had been a storm. The cowpunchers had spent these dark days playing very simple games with greasy cards, for they would rather face brimstone than the wet. From this engrossing occupation they could hardly tear themselves to cook meals. Sometimes the first cowpuncher going to the door would open it, and, looking out at the beating storm, say—

“She’s still a’ storming.”

Or, peering through the narrow windows at the thick white air, he cracked one of their immemorial jokes—

“It’ll soon be snowing.”

But at last the thick canopy was withdrawn, and a sunny sky unfolded itself over the white ground ; and we all escaped from the dreary confinement of the dark room. To my delight Belphœbe came out to the ranch. By good fortune and undeserved chance her favour to me was no longer withheld. The change in the sky symbolised the change in our relations. The period of coldness and mist was now over for us, and I stood in the full warmth of her kindness. During the probationary time I had duly endured the vexations imposed as trials upon

me. They had been light, and my feelings had not been lacerated. Belphebe was of too frank and amiable a disposition to make them heavy, and had only inflicted them from a sense of duty. Her friends had told her that men lightly esteemed what they lightly won, and, discarding her own inclinations, she had followed their advice. Now I saw her head, with its ebony crown of dark hair, daily.

I had set out early one morning with an axe on my shoulder, crushing the crisp snow with my high-heeled boots. The cowpunchers had started out earlier to cut logs, and my object was the same. We were engaged in building a *corral* (a yard) a little higher up the canyon in which the Diamond Heart's lay. It is made by digging holes at intervals of ten or twelve feet in a circle, and sticking heavy posts in these holes. The posts are then connected by six logs placed one upon the other. About sixteen or twenty of these panels in a circle form a corral. Complete, it is an impenetrable enclosure, defying the weight and agility of the most active horse and steer.

We were cutting trees to make these logs and the posts out of their trunks. I had been engaged the day before at a spot on the summit of a high bluff, which I was now climbing. Below me spread the beautiful and broad canyon of the Diamond Heart's, round which the mountains, in whose very bosom it lay, sloped their deep sides in gentle declivities. I was alone. The air was calm and silent. The other woodcutters were invisible, but lost in the

distance I could hear the pleasant sound of their axes.

Like most applications of physical strength, the mere use of an axe is not in itself difficult. I had gained sufficient experience to realise what an exhibition of skill is the ease and force of a genuine lumberman, who can almost shave you with his axe, without being able to emulate their force and accuracy, or avoid muscular exertion. I actively but unskilfully continued my labour among the variety of trees that clothed the bluffs and those opposite; oaks, whose wood of all is the most useful to man. Obstinate and as resisting as iron, it has the strength and longevity required for building. Kindling slowly and reluctantly as a fuel, it burns long and warmly, transforming itself into glowing piles, burning ember palaces, that suddenly vanish into ashes. There were the trees of the desert, junipers, leafless, twisted, gaunt, looking like some prophet lost in the wilderness, wildly waving his gnarled arms at humanity. There were pines, tall and numberless, rich in odorous gums. These are the wood for dark mornings, when the sun is not yet risen on camp; at the touch of fire they throw up jovial and triumphant flames.

I had been working steadily when, looking down from the edge of the bluff, I saw, to my delight, Belphœbe approaching. My eyes pursued her in her light and joyful ascent. Grace was in her movements as she climbed the precipitous side of the hill, and she was still sparkling from the

pleasure of the exercise when she reached me, and breathless. As I pressed her lips I could feel against my breast the quick rise and fall of her bosom, which, like fruit in May, had hardly begun to swell, and only hinted its presence beneath her dress.

I asked her why she had come out to interrupt me. She answered—

"I thought your work would now be done, I want some help to find my wandering horse Rosea. He is lost among those bluffs. To search with you would still be sweet. But do not let me stop what you are doing."

I would have replied with a kiss, but she lifted her arm with rosy pudency, and the flush of her efforts grew deeper on her cheeks. She sat down to wait as demure as a good little child. The riding-dress of blue canvas she wore became her deliciously. The full trousers covered by the short skirt and furled round her straight, vigorous legs, gave her walk a huntress' gait; but curled on her wooden seat she had the appearance of an Oriental beauty, escaped from captivity into the mountains.

I resumed my tedious work with energy. I had already made a deep breach in one of the trees when she arrived. It now quivered and swayed, and the whole structure fell in a heap on the ground. I stood in a heroic attitude above the pile and said—

"I feel like a Homeric hero who strikes with blows of a great axe a lofty tower, firm planted

on its base. But at last it slowly oscillates and loudly falls in heaps of stones and dust."

In this leafy ruin I tugged and chopped. Belphœbe began to assist me, but I ordered her to desist. She protested—

"Oh, let me help! I do not like to sit with empty hands while you exert yourself. This sharp air lends work itself a glow, while idleness sits shivering, and heavy tasks in common done bind with a closer and a stronger grasp than all the pleasures shared. If we should leave the ones we love to labour unassisted, of what use then is love?"

I replied—

"On these rough branches you will tear your hands, and I would rather strain my back and crack each sinew that I have rather than that your finger should be scratched."

She skipped among the branches and tugged at those I lopped off at the trunk. Her desire was to use the axe itself, but no petition of hers could have induced me to let her swing that heavy mass of sharp steel so near her feet. To evade her wish I said it was time we looked for her horse.

I put on my coat, but before setting out we looked at the scene which lay before us. The mountains on the other side of the canyon were still deep in snow. The tall straight pines, spreading their white branches, looked like the masts of an innumerable fleet, frozen by an enchantment. For the moment the hollow echoing of

the axes had ceased. The murmur of the little stream, swollen with melted snow and furious, was the only sound in the valley. The scene was lovely, and Belphœbe put her hand in mine as we watched it.

We clambered long among the thickets of live oak and round rocky bluffs without seeing her horse anywhere. Her object was to give it some corn ; I laughed at her intention and her horse, as I always did. Her purchase had been charitable, and though strong and trustworthy, it was meagre and of doleful countenance. We found bands of horses, who are sociable and live in companies, but he was not among them. Evidently he had developed a meditative and philosophical turn of mind, in harmony with his person, and had retired from the grazing herds of his thoughtless comrades. I gave this explanation of his disappearance to Belphœbe, who smiled and said—

“He is a faithful beast, enduring, gentle, and he has suffered much to make him thin. I purchased him to save him from the hand of an unfeeling man. The ridicule you cast upon him does not hurt.”

We had reached a kind of platform dominating the canyon, and I asked Belphœbe if she would sing a song. She assented at once. It was an excellent theatre ; above was the radiant dome of blue, under which the white snow, covering the mountains and the valley, shone with insufferable splendour : she lifted her voice—

" O well beloved,  
The angry storm may chide  
And beat upon us with its bitter wind,  
If you from me are not removed,  
And I am pressed against your side,  
And feel your heart is kind.

For all the blinded world's ingratitude  
I do not care;  
Nor the insensate fits of strife  
That poison our short life,  
If you with loyalty will bear  
Me at your side along the uneven road and rude."

It was an ancient tune, all flourishes and falls, and on that stage took me with ravishment. After a while we resumed our search, and my eye was caught by Rosea's gaunt back pondering the universe under a juniper. His ascetic frame was couched on a piece of dry ground. But he was not alone in his retreat: two little black donkeys had joined him as disciples. The little sect watched us approaching, slowly turning their heads as they lay on the ground. When it became certain we were making a circuit to drive them down to the ranch, they heaved themselves up and began making their way down the mountains voluntarily. The erect, black ears of the donkeys gave them a hypocritical look: I doubted whether their conversion to the views of the emaciated and earnest Rosea was sincere. They astutely selected the smoothest way down, keeping a single file. Rosea dropped his head from his lank shoulders, dejected at being driven back into secular affairs. The two little donkeys, as I

anticipated, were more worldly, frisked their tails, and with their heels cheerfully lashed out at Belphœbe, who loved their antics, and was teasing them by throwing twigs and pebbles at them.

We drove them slowly into a corral in front of the ranch, and I went to fetch them bags of corn. On my return they were standing still, drooping their heads, with a look of injury as if they could hardly resign themselves to the prospect of a full meal. But I had hardly reached the corral when I heard a whole troop of horses rattling down the hill, driven by the foreman. He had wanted that morning a particularly powerful bay horse called Big Enough, which was out in the pasture; I dropped my bags of corn to help him drive them into the corral, and Reinhold, who had been buried in a book on the verandah, dropped it and took up his position too. Belphœbe climbed to the top bars of the corral and sat there.

As the whole troop with downcast heads were filing one by one into the corral, the very bay, Big Enough, started madly at the sight of a piece of rope, broke from the rest, and went swinging off up the hill. The foreman turned his own beast in pursuit, spurring him. As he raced up the steep bank, tearing down the rattling stones, he untied his rope from the saddle-horn, the whole canyon re-echoing with the curses he flung at the fugitive. In a moment the noose was open and loose, swinging round his head, and flew to drop on the neck of Big Enough. The feel of the

rope tamed him, and he discreetly allowed himself to be led back to his comrades in the corral.

The day before the foreman, with his eagle eye, had seen some unbranded colts flying among a bunch of wild mares. He intended to put the Diamond Heart brand on them, and anticipating a hard chase after the mares, he had procured this fresh horse. While he saddled him, I drew Rosea out of the herd in the corral and led him in front of the ranch, where Belphœbe patted him and offered him corn, which he consumed with melancholy satisfaction. The foreman stood by drawing on his gauntleted gloves, his ragged clothes and loose scarf fluttering, and his foot arched nobly on the high heels of his torn top-boots. He surveyed Rosea's drawn sides, and said—

"That horse looks poor."

I was struck with the look of gravity and reflection that Rosea wore, and answered—

"Rosea is a philosophical horse."

The first cowpuncher, who was going out with him, was drawing on his *shaps*, huge leggings that looked like a divided blacksmith's apron. He heard my remark, and exclaimed critically—

"What kind of sofa did you say that was? I must get me a coffee-grinder and grind that word out to see what it means."

His huge mouth grinned at being able to display this immemorial joke of his. In his simplicity he viewed anything longer than a trisyllable with genial suspicion, and he mispronounced any he did know. As they were setting out, to give a

display before Belphœbe, he leaned back and spurred his horse in the shoulders. The horse's back humped, down went his head, and he "pitched" at every step. The cowpuncher, balancing himself with his shoulders and loins, and with his elbows stuck out, disappeared down the road, emitting mock screams of terror.

Belphœbe and I climbed the wooden step, to the open verandah where Reinhold had been sitting, wrapped in a voluminous greatcoat, reading the whole morning. It was a work dealing with the products of Western America. I took it up and remarked—

"They do produce and export a lot of meat and wheat."

Reinhold leant forward and spoke in his emphatic way, which to most people seemed too absolute: the slight harshness of his German accent made him appear still more dogmatic. But the originality of his remarks, or rather his harangues, was a compensation for his tone.

"I do not think," he said, "meat and wheat are its most important products, though they are very large. I think religions are, and will be its greatest export one day."

"What do you mean?" asked Belphœbe.

"There are at present," he declared, "more than one hundred recognised species of religions existing in this part of the world. The Christianity transplanted out here has given out scores of fantastic and strange worships—Adventists, Universalists, Shakers, Christadelphians, Zionists, Memnonites,

Dunkards, Spiritualists, Moravians, Mormons, Christian Scientists, and a crowd of others. These cities of hustlers and trolley-cars are the real land of faith and wonders, of revivals and conversions, of sudden turnings of whole communities to repentance, and the violent ecstasy of faith. In comparison we are incredulous and sceptical, and cannot show the same choice of new ways of life, and new promises of eternal bliss and of knowledge of the future. These hard-headed, nervous people thirst for the supernatural, and the new evangelists of their own invention hardly satisfy them. They are eager patrons of chiromantists, sybils, fortune-tellers, epileptics, figure-flingers, crystal-gazers, magicians, spiritualists, sand-flingers, wizards, sorcerers, mediums, catoptromantists, seers, soothsayers, witches, sortilegists, pyphonesses, rhabdomantists, exorcists, and necromancers : and St. Louis and Chicago have more prophets than saloons."

"I think it very silly of them to have either," said Belphœbe.

"According to your account," I remarked, "the Americans are going to control the world's supply of religion as well as that of the other necessities of life ; a regular Salvation Trust. It is lucky we are outside the area of their operations."

"On the contrary," Reinhold answered, "what is most interesting is that our semi-pagan old countries are beginning to turn to them for new creeds. The ground is ready prepared, just as it was in pagan antiquity two thousand years ago,

positive, material, unreligious, just like our modern civilisation. Our great masses during the last few centuries have been absolutely materialised, and honour their religion with little more than a formal subscription: its intellectual classes are euhemerists, who do homage in public to what they rather smile at in private, or philosophical unbelievers, and one must go far back in history to find leaders of our nations who are men of devotion and faith; theology, dogma, creeds, have been abandoned by their professed defenders, the believers, who fly from instead of meeting the attacks of science, criticism, and philosophy. The situations are very much the same, except that we are turning west for religions, while antiquity turned east, to Asia and her inexhaustible fertility of beliefs, and among them was the same struggle as is taking place here. You may not know——”

“Be generous, Reinhold,” I interrupted him, “I do know how to read.”

“You may not know,” he continued, “that before the ancient world preferred to all other gods Christ of Judea, it had hesitated for several centuries between him and many others, between Adonis of Syria, and Attis of Phrygia, and Mithra of Persia, and Osiris of Egypt, and Cybele the mother of the gods. Between them existed the same resemblance that exists beteen these American competitors: the defeated gods were very like their Judaic victor. To her faithful Cybele held out the promise of immortality; so did Mithra the sun-god, likewise enjoining personal asceticism in a

voluptuous age. He was the most powerful and an almost victorious rival, and the prevailing religion had to compromise with him, to shift the date of Christmas to the date of his great sun festival, where we still celebrate it. Attis himself, like Adonis, suffered death and enjoyed resurrection for the remission of the sins of mankind, and his followers, like those of Osiris, celebrated this sacrifice with sacraments ; the Easter festivals in the south of Italy are feasts of Adonis with a change of names."

Belphebe interrupted him admiringly—

"It is very clever of you to remember all those names. I am sure they go into one of my ears and come out at the other. I wonder you can even spell them."

"So I anticipate," Reinhold went on, rudely neglecting to acknowledge the kind compliment, "similar rivalries, similarly prolonged, and with a similar mutual influence, between these innumerable American sects, and it will be generations before one overcomes all the others. But I have no doubt that the conquering sect, whichever it may be, a small community existing now in the Colorado mountains perhaps, will not remain an uncouth superstition, but will triumph over its competitors and predecessors by joining hands with the reigning power and the reigning thought, just as Christianity, originally a sect of the local religion of the Judaic highlands, allied itself with Greek philosophy and Roman organisation ; and that my new religion, whatever it is, will at the right moment find a St. Clement to conciliate the

philosophers, and a St. Cyprian to give it the framework of a perfect government."

These propositions seemed to me to be hazardous, and the facts he referred to were unknown to me.

"It is very interesting," said Belphœbe, "but I do not see the use of it."

"These American beliefs have not done much so far," I remarked.

"Only one, certainly," he admitted, "Christian Science, has taken root, but it grows high and spreads far; so far ridicule has killed other attempts to proselytise, Dowie and other saviours, but this is only a beginning, I am sure."

I expressed an opinion that Europe could develop any new religion it required.

Reinhold dissented—

"It will always be positive and material, and incapable of doing so; it will always have to go elsewhere for beliefs in the supernatural, where nature is not mild and easy and to be conquered, but terrible and invincible, and only to be pacified by prayer; and for spiritual ideas, to where life is not like its own, easy and secure, but uncertain, and consequently future existence more important. It is only in other than European countries that people live in really supernatural and spiritual surroundings. If you will allow me, I will read you a story that was once told me by a commercial traveller, a countryman of mine, who travelled somewhere near Algeria. I took down what he said carefully, and you must forgive the faults, for he was not a man of great education."

He went inside to fetch the manuscript, and I brought out a rocking-chair on the verandah for Belphœbe, with rugs, for it was cold. She leant back her pale face against the cushions, as if the weight of her black tresses was too heavy for her frail head, and was like a pale winter flower. Reinhold returned with a roll of manuscript, which he unfolded and began—

“ My firm had instructed me to call on the Sultan of a small African principality. It was understood that he intended to introduce reforms into his state, and though he had only lately ascended the throne, his reputation as a progressive sovereign was already established ; his court was crowded with commercial travellers. I justified the confidence which my firm, one of the largest dry-goods merchants and exporters of Hamburg, placed in me, and was fortunate enough to capture his favour ; during the few weeks I was at his court I grew intimate with him ; for he placed all Europeans on an equal level of superiority, and, like a true Mohammedan, knew of no social distinctions, an advantage I thought it my duty to utilise on behalf of my employers.

“ One afternoon I had been sitting with him in an open vestibule of the palace while he skimmed through catalogues and books of designs, and he had ordered several dozen cases of corsets for his household, and for himself a handsome cab, which was to be painted scarlet. The vestibule opened on a wide verandah running round the palace, which was new, and small, and had been built on

the edge of the town. Between it and the hot, barren country lay the deserted palace of a former dynasty. The large ruins cumbered the ground. Improvements were a common topic with us, and I suggested the demolition of the falling heaps of stones. The Sultan gave me no direct answer, but I saw a superior smile in his dark eyes ; for a few moments he caressed the thick and handsome beard that framed his face, and said—

“ My father spent an easy and peaceful life. It is true that his reign was threatened by a constant succession of pretenders to the throne. But as these rebellions were perpetual, they had this advantage, that my father had grown accustomed to and remained undisturbed by them. His was a happy age, and I feel how we have decayed since that time ; we had no trade, and my officials thus were kept honest and incorrupt. Nowadays I am aware how they take bribes, but do not see how to cure the evil. They have been ruined by the growth of commerce. My father left most of his business to his vizier, and when he was not eating, which he did well and copiously, he sat in the large court of the palace where all his people could approach him. Holy men of all sorts, pilgrims, lunatics, and preachers, also congregated there, and especially exorcists, for my father was not only strict in all the observances of our religion, but he carefully respected every kind of Afreet and spirit. These holy men act as intercessors with them. The corporation of performers also enjoyed his singular favour ; hardly a day passed that the

procession of wrestlers, contortionists, jugglers with tall felt hats, conjurers, mimics, gymnasts, leapers, bear-leaders, and monkey-leaders, did not arrive in the court, with a piercing din of fifes, cymbals, and cries, preceded by four acrobats walking on their hands, and four dancers walking on their toes.

"They were always welcome, and my father's greatest pleasure was to watch their monotonous performance. One day their exhibitions were proceeding as usual, and were being watched by him with the same satisfaction as he had watched them for half a century, for he disliked novelty. But they had grown tedious to myself, and to my elder brother, who was lively and quick-witted, and who had seen the same tricks unchanged, almost identical, all his life. That day we noticed a stranger sitting on the edge of the crowd, glancing round and round with large eyes of curiosity; he was different from the other performers though he sat among them, and wore no costume, but an ordinary flowing robe of white. He had no professional instrument of a familiar sort, but next to him there was a black box and a bundle of smooth and tapering sticks. He attracted the attention of my brother where we sat lolling on the ground and whispering to each other, and when the tricks were finished he walked to my father and said—

"There is a stranger among the performers. Can he not also show his skill?"

"My father, who disliked new faces, glanced frowning at the intruder. But a request of my

brother, his eldest son, was irresistible, and he assented.

“The stranger stepped up to my father, confidently carrying his box and his bundle. He saluted him and said—

“O lord of all true believers, may the blessings of Allah be upon you. I am ready to show you what you have never seen before.”

“My father replied—

“Show what you have to show, stranger.”

“The stranger thanked him and asked—

“I have but one request to make. I require the assistance of some person, some slave or servant.”

“His demand was granted, and all the court formed a circle to watch him. He undid his bundle, and it appeared the sticks were no bundle at all, but connected. He built a tripod with them like one that is made over a camp-fire to hang the pot from. On this structure he placed the black box. These preparations excited our curiosity to expect some startling piece of magic. The stranger consulted the sun or the sky. He gesticulated. He used a piece of cloth. The young black slave who was assisting him was ordered to move from place to place. This slave twisted himself with uneasiness, and rolled his eyes in dismay as if an Afreet was about to appear and carry him off, and his grimaces provoked my father’s big laugh. But just when we were raised to the very height of expectation, the stranger stopped his incantations, and, bowing low to my father, said—

“O lord of all true believers, my feats are not

like the feats of others. They are not complete in a day. The night must help me too. But tomorrow I will conclude my trick.'

"This impertinence, added to his imposture, irritated my father and he spoke to him sharply. We were perplexed to think what could be the stranger's motive in thus endangering his person by gratuitous insolence. My brother, who felt himself responsible for the scene, ordered the servants to drive him out, but as he was hustled away, he looked round complacently, unabashed by the rebuke he had received.

"The day after, my brother and I found the stranger sitting in the court. My brother, still vexed at the scene of the preceding day, avoided seeing him. But the stranger resolutely placed himself across his road and thrust into his hand a piece of paper rolled like a petition, but smaller. He unfolded it, and to our amazement we saw an exact, but colourless, image of the young black slave who had assisted the stranger in his performance the day before. The roll of the eye, the contorted body, were exactly reproduced; in the background, confusedly, was the crowd that had filled the court. Then it startled me; now it would not. I am familiar with these pictures, which are called photographs, and I even possess one of myself, produced at Paris, with the cross of the Legion of Honour hanging round my neck, and wearing sidespring boots. But at my father's court such a thing had never been seen. It was also the first image of man we boys had looked

at, for our religion forbids the reproduction of his form as encouraging idolatry. We were intimidated and thought it was impious audacity as well as black magic ; my father was awed, but took a different view.

“‘This man is useful,’ he said. ‘He possesses great powers and can deprive his enemies of their lives, as no doubt he has done to this young black slave. But he should be careful how he uses his power. For this slave has done him no harm.’

“‘The stranger was therefore rewarded and enrolled in the household. His name was Abdullah, and he rapidly ingratiated himself.

“‘One evening my brother and I, with some friends of ours, were watching from this room the swift descent of the sun behind these hills. During the implacable heat of midday we remained in the inner courts of the palace, where the fierce rays could not penetrate, and the perpetual shade was refreshed by flowing water and the spray of marble fountains. But at evening my brother liked to watch the strange and splendid colours with which the sun shot the sky before he left it. We were lounging in the porch, tasting the first cool breeze of the night, which was descending rapidly. Already the hills opposite were swallowed in darkness, when suddenly Abdullah appeared on the porch wearing a complacent air, and saluted us. My brother said to him mockingly—

“‘Abdullah, have you any more tricks to show ? Are they more or are they less wonderful than the last one ?’

"‘Abdullah, unabashed, showed his teeth in a large smile and answered—

"‘I have a still more wonderful trick, which, if you please, I will show you now.’

"‘All we little boys skipped with delight at this offer, and I cried to him—

"‘Do you need your box and your bundle of sticks this time?’

"‘He shook his head in the negative, and looked mysteriously at the sky. He said—

"‘I must be inside a house and a room.’

"‘My brother led the way into this room. Night had fallen, so he ordered me to light the lamp which hangs from the ceiling, and we all sat down in high excitement. Abdullah remained standing. He waited for our silence, and for our eyes and attention to be fixed on him. Then he said—

"‘I can make myself invisible.’

"‘He stopped to watch the effect of this statement. Our mouths were open with surprise and none of us found words to speak. At this moment my father entered the room. We all rose, but he made sign with his hand for us to go on and walked on tip-toe to a corner of the room. Abdullah solemnly repeated—

"‘I can make myself invisible. This is a secret I have. But I can only do so once in my life. As this is the most valuable thing I possess, it is just that I should make profit by it. I will ask you to give me whatever money you have on you at the present moment.’

“Without waiting for an answer he stretched out his hand to me, and without protest I gave him the few coins I had. All in turn were solicited, and they all, including my father, surrendered their money without resistance, and his collection must have brought him four or five dollars. He counted it carefully and hid it in his clothes, and announced—

“I shall now make myself invisible.”

Saying this, he stepped to the lamp and blew it out with one deep breath; as he had promised, he was instantly invisible, for the room was plunged in darkness. My brother and my father were the first to burst into laughter. Being young, the rest of us did not immediately understand the mystification. It amused us, but we clamoured that he should restore us our money. He defeated all our attempts to extract it from him. The whole farce greatly amused my father, especially this last incident, our discomfiture and attempts to regain our money by argument, Abdullah's impassive face and resistance to our demands. He was in high good-humour. My brother impulsively asked if Abdullah could become a personal attendant of his. My father, whose only amusements were buffooneries, said gravely—

“There is no joy like those of culture, and no gifts like those of the mind. No prince can possess them whose servants do not.”

“The neat and apt turns of Abdullah's speech were a sufficient proof that he possessed these qualities. But my father did not recognise them.

My brother asked permission to try Abdullah, who stood by indifferently. It was granted to him, and he took down a lute from the walls. He strung it to the proper pitch, and touched a few chords reflectively. Then lifting up the clear and sweet voice of youth he sang—

“ What time the sun’s long midday heat  
With fire loads the air,  
When you, o’er floors of syenite,  
In languor shall repair  
To where, within the palace halls,  
A pool of water fresh  
Catches the dancing shafts of light  
Within a trembling mesh,  
And then from ivory shoulders smooth  
Your silken robe shall slip,  
And in the bath’s transparency  
Your glowing body dip,  
The waters that with murmurs soft  
In glittering columns rise  
And fall in showers, sparkle less  
Than the light of your eyes.”

“ When he had ceased he handed the lute to Abdullah without a word, who understood the mute challenge and sat down. Changing the pitch of the lute, without hesitation, he sang this answer—

“ What time the nightingale’s high song  
In fainting sobs shall die  
Drunk with the wines that in the cup  
Of clustered lilies lie,  
When faint with pleasures of the day,  
Your limbs with dancing weak,  
The sombre groves of cypress sad  
With languid eyes you seek,

## A THREE-FOOT STOOL

To make in the warm summer air  
Your secret, scented bed  
Of leaves and heaped jasmine flowers,  
By lilac odours led,  
A butterfly upon your breast  
Its golden wings shall close,  
Thinking that in the night it tastes  
The petals of a rose."

"His voice had a warm and ringing note. Though my brother's invention was melodious and easy, it had been easily surpassed by Abdullah's choice of phrase and music; and this to my father was a proof of utmost eminence. He was again pressed for his permission. He answered, stroking the grey beard that ran round his jovial face—

"Our prophet Mohammed (on him be peace and prayer) says deliberation is the assistant of counsel; therefore let a night, as well as a day, pass over thy resolution."

"We knew this postponement only concealed a surrender. His opposition to my brother's wishes was ever formal, and his final consent always certain. The next day Abdullah was attached to our persons."

At that moment we heard the crunch of gravel, and Reinhold interrupted his reading. Three horses appeared in file lolling round the corner of the ranch, wearing their usual air of jaded indifference. They had come to drink, and we stopped to watch the kindly beasts dip their nostrils in the cool stream. They lounged off again, elaborately careless, but with an eye upon us, and Reinhold resumed his reading—

"We were fascinated by his company. His life had been compact of experience and adventures, and he overflowed with stories of them. Our thirst for information about the great world beyond our mountains was insatiable, and Abdullah liked to hear the sound of his own voice. His repertoire of Arab poetry was inexhaustible, and he had great powers of improvisation. We were impressionable, and at an age when one is easily swayed. He was grown, accomplished, lively, and experienced, and he soon became our leader rather than our follower. We took to quoting his ideas and using his words. He also excelled in sports; in those which were matters of dexterity and grace, my brother could equal him. But he was first when endurance and determination were required. This completed his ascendancy over us.

"He was born in Egypt, and had the short and powerful build of its inhabitants. But he had drifted all over the world of Islam. At Stamboul he had lived among Christians, and learnt many of their arts, among them that of using the sun to draw pictures. It is possible also that he had exchanged his religion for theirs, and learnt to adore three gods instead of one; but he naturally concealed his apostasy. He had certainly contracted their appetite for wealth. Like them, he thought a man should spend the chief hours of his life in acquiring it, and he despised our race because they would not inflict on themselves that voluntary misery. We were boys who do not examine and pronounce verdicts on their companions; or else we would

have become aware of the man's secret ambition, and judged him by it. His desire was for large and sudden wealth ; this had directed his erratic life, and if we had been observant, his favourite topics would have revealed it. They were buried treasures, and sudden fortune and strokes of luck, and his account was, he had several times almost caught the tide of fortune, but always missed it. He grew bitter in the recital of his misfortunes.

"'Chance had not floated him here. We did not detect his object, but it became plain on retrospect. The treasures that lie in that old palace opposite, and the fire Afreets who guard them, furnish all the stories of the country. Most people have seen these Afreets in the shape of a wrinkled old woman, or a huge and hideous negro, or preferably in a column of smoke. If you stay here long enough you will no doubt see one yourself. It was these reports that had drawn Abdullah here, and our becoming his intimates assisted his scheme. He no doubt took full advantage of his new importance, and his plan was to involve us, for our complicity would have protected him from punishment. He derided the accounts of fire Afreets and their vengeance, and flashed prospects of gold and jewels before us. He hinted at an expedition into the old palace.

"'We resisted his suggestions with the tacit opposition of boys, and he was too astute to press us, or to expose himself to an open refusal. He appeared to drop the idea, and reverted to being the entertaining and interesting companion he was before. One day that we were coming back here,

we took an intricate road through the old palace, unknown to us before. The sequel showed this was not fortuitous, and that Abdullah had resolved to do by surprise what he could not do by persuasion. We were unsuspecting. The tall thick walls of the palace ran along both sides of the road. That afternoon we had been in the mood of challenges, and Abdullah had been defying us to feats of strength and skill. We had vanquished him and were in a high state of confidence. Suddenly we came to a low, narrow opening in the wall. Steps leading downward disappeared into the darkness. We stopped to look at it, and immediately Abdullah cried—

“‘I challenge you to go down these steps.’

“‘My brother without hesitation went down them. But he had not descended more than two or three when he returned back to the daylight. Abdullah, without giving him time for reflection, ran down them himself. My brother followed, and I went after them both.

“‘At the bottom there was a floor of hard earth. Only a faint light reached us, and our surroundings were invisible. The air was sweet, though there was a dampness in it, and cobwebs, ancient and voluminous, tangled themselves round our heads. Abdullah lighted a small metal box he had produced from the folds of his clothes. Its glow was small, and as Abdullah held it in close to his bosom to shield it from a chance current of air, it barely served to show us his position. We moved on, groping and uncertain. The vault in which we

were seemed high and was certainly large. At last Abdullah's outstretched hand found the wall. This guided him a certain distance, then suddenly his lamp was blown out.

"But it was only because he had reached an opening in the wall, the draught of which was fatal to his small light. He stepped through the opening with excessive caution. It was another large vault, and in the same fashion we crossed a succession of them. I was entranced with fear. My senses were bound and incapable of independent action. Only shame kept me close to my brother. But all my faculties were stunned, and my impression of all the remaining events is vague and confused.

"Our advance continued for a time that seemed interminable. At last we found ourselves in a vault strewn with mounds of pebbles. Our feet sank in the crumbling heap without being able to touch the floor. Abdullah turned to us and said in a rapid tense whisper, "Rubies!" and at the same time fell on his knees and filled one of the large folds of his dress with them. We mechanically did the same. Abdullah did not wait for us, or take any notice of our presence, but hurried away as soon as he was ready. We followed, for he had the lamp. But we had not gone more than a few steps before my brother clutched my arm and said—

"I am not going to steal these."

"He loosed the fold of his gown and I heard the load of precious stones rattle to the ground. I

imitated him. Abdullah still shuffled hurriedly before us. As he tumbled up the narrow stairs of the vault, and had almost reached the light, a pigeon flew in and struck him in the face. He staggered ; it winged its way past us and vanished into the darkness.

“‘Abdullah disappeared for a few days. We thought he had fled with his treasure to the European settlements of the coast, for if discovery threatened even us with blows and displeasures, it would have involved death and fearful agony to him. A suspicion of the theft would have worked my father into a frenzy of rage. He would have considered the provocation to the invisible inhabitants of the palace sufficient to ruin himself, his family, and his kingdom. Besides, only Europeans can treat rough stones and give them their proper lustre. Our polishers are unskilful workmen, and in their hands they remain unshapely, their beauty dulled and obscured. Yours can endow them with symmetry and brilliance, and their rubies are like beauties unveiled.

“‘Abdullah resumed his duties, but his loquacity and lively spirit had left him. He moved about, silent and preoccupied, or sat staring in front of himself with a fixed melancholy expression.

“‘At first we thought him absorbed in some scheme for running away ; or that he had drawn a curse upon himself and would pine away. But his cheeks remained full, retaining their wholesome colour, and he moved about with a robust, muscular step. Only his eye had the tense and

distant look of a man who is preyed upon by some secret passion.

“One morning, passing by his room, I noticed a lamp burning in it, with the pale and sickly beam it has in the broad light of day. My brother laughed at me when I told him, and I thought myself mistaken. That day Abdullah scarcely spoke a word and the sadness of his face was painful. My brother, who was humane, spoke to me about it, although he avoided referring to our subterranean adventure, and that evening, with the evident intention of cheering him, he took down his lute and sang one of his favourite songs—

“By your walk I am enchanted,  
Each gliding foot so lightly planted.  
A pitcher tall of crystal clear  
Your poisèd head might firmly bear.  
The pitcher’s smooth and rounded swell  
Would match your lovely bosom well.  
The lights that in the crystal dance  
Would not outshine your sparkling glance.”

“We expected him to improvise some novel and enchanting answer; but he took the lute and sang in response—

“To enter only I aspire  
The golden palaces of fire,  
Where staircase and where portico  
With molten liquid brightness glow,  
And where the soft delicious heat  
Will on delighted senses beat.  
One day I will seek out that place,  
And the fair spirits of that race.”

“This was the first extended speech we had

heard from him since his reappearance. We were startled by the wild ideas it contained, which were almost unintelligible to us. At that moment my brother and I were sitting on a rug on one side of the room ; Abdullah sat on the other side and between us hung the lamp, the unsteady light of which fell on Abdullah's face. His eyes were fixed on the flame with the same radiant pleasure that a lover looks upon his mistress. He did not notice us, but continued to gaze into the flame, which communicated to him its emotions. For when it flickered and fell, a look of concern came into his face ; and its steady, even burning was reflected in his calm joy.

"The next morning I again noticed a lamp burning in Abdullah's room, although the sun was high. To refute my brother who had laughed at my report I ran and fetched him. He came, and on seeing it strode straight to the window. Inside sat Abdullah ; the small metal lamp he carried was lighted and in his hand. He was toying with it and admiring it as a connoisseur might some gem. Sometimes he let the tiny flame burn in the hollow of his hand : sometimes he ran his fingers through it and closed his eyes in delight. We noticed his hands were red with burns, and his fingers purple and almost skinless. Though my brother made no concealment of his presence at the window, for he disdained spying, Abdullah remained undisturbed by our presence.

"This taste for fire was not occasional ; it had

mastered Abdullah, and he lived to satisfy it. The autumn mornings were now chill, and, as usual, small iron brasiers, full of live coal, glowed everywhere in the courts. Abdullah never left them. He spent his days sitting and lolling by them. Close to them, or any other flame, he was calm and satisfied; but if occasion called him away he sank back into his mute dejection. Otherwise, there was nothing strange in his behaviour, and it was not remarked. But his passion for that element was watched by us two, who knew the offence he had committed against the fire Afreets. We watched with great alarm, but dared not speak or act. We had already risked their anger, and the vengeance they were taking on Abdullah made them still more dreadful to us.

"But their vindictiveness against him was not exhausted, and they exacted the full penalty. One day Abdullah was in the crowd that had gathered in the great court. He was squatting on his heels, leaning over one of the many brasiers that warmed it. His neighbours thought he usurped more than his share of it, and one of them tried to push him over. Another said—

"The fire Afreets have concealed rubies in the brasier; Abdullah has seen them and is going to be a rich man."

"All eyes were turned upon Abdullah; he gave no answer but smiled to himself. Then suddenly he seized the brasier with both hands and put it on his head like a hat. There was a smell of burning flesh and the red coals fell around him.

A look of exquisite pleasure and satisfaction came over his face and he rolled on his side, dead.'

"The Sultan stopped speaking and appeared buried in thought. As he prided himself as a teller of stories, I knew the conclusion was a moment of great complacency. I therefore seized the opportunity to bring forward a piece of business. His fancy had been caught by the idea of bicycles and motor cars, and on my mentioning the subject to him on this well-chosen occasion, he told me he preferred a motor car. I informed him that as a wholesale firm I could only deal in dozens, or at least in half-dozens, and he answered with indifference that he would then take half-a-dozen. I booked the order; though for the time being their value to him would be small, as there were no roads in his country, yet the cars would no doubt be useful as soon as roads were built."

Reinhold had read his story with his usual complacency, and long before the end of it I had been fretting to get away. The foreman had asked me to go and help him with the colts, and the corral to which he was to drive them was some way down the canyons. I asked Belphebe if she cared to accompany me, but she shook her head in negation. Her feelings, I knew, were always shocked by the brutality necessarily practised on the half-wild animals of a ranch. Her consideration was too great to allow her to express her aversion to it, but I knew it detracted from the pleasure of her visit. It almost outweighed the enjoyment given to her there by the familiar life with the

animals of a ranch, between whom and you no servants or grooms intervene. In that intimacy their characters acquired regular features, distinct and quaint. I did not expect her to accompany me to see the colts caught and branded.

I was about to start when both she and I caught sight of a white donkey, Jack, who had followed his friends the horses down, and now lay couched on a dry place near them, outside the corral. He had once been regularly employed to carry a pack, many years before, in the company of these large creatures, and had acquired a taste for their company: he rather cut his own people in the pasture. He was now a pensioner on the ranch where he had been a servant as far back as anybody could remember. Occasionally descending from the thickets, where he spent his declining years, he would sometimes be found outside the house, staring at it, with his spreading ears, whose large proportions proclaimed his high-bred donkey blood, standing upright; he would remain thus in silent speculation, surprised, no doubt, that the intrusion of man should still continue. The natural contempt of all donkeys for the animal man was heightened in his case by the aristocracy of his family.

He was a favourite with Belphebe, who ran down the steps of the veranda to him with a cry of delight, and sat on him as if he had been a long white stool. Jack was in evident perplexity. Being used as a stool was completely novel, and justified sudden flight and a careful examination of the

whole affair from a distance. On the other hand he had never received anything from Belphebe but caresses, and bits of stale bread, handfuls of corn, and other toothsome delicacies. So he lay in his place ; but his sail-broad ears stood upright to the skies. Whether they were meant to invoke the aid of heaven, or whether their position assisted the process of reflection, was uncertain.

We left him to watch the pecking, gobbling herd of chickens whom Reinhold had been ordered by the foreman, in a way as imperious as his own, to feed. He was throwing corn to them, and we went to watch that regular scene of greed and voracity. Chickens are most disagreeable, if useful, friends to live with ; most indelicate, inquisitive, impertinent, omnipresent people, unlike most animals, who suffer from shyness ; fat, greasy citizens, with their portly, complacent strut, and their screaming flurry and cowardice if their feathers are touched. I had a special prejudice against them as the only beasts who have ever gone nearly killing me. I used to look for chickens' eggs about the ranch. As they used to lay everywhere, I used to look everywhere. Now dynamite is always kept on a ranch to clear rocks and big trees out of the road, but I did not know this. I was once crawling under the ranch, which was built on a slope, on all fours, with a lighted match to find a nest I thought was there, amid piles of boxes and bags. In one box I noticed long round pieces of sticky, yellow stuff, and wondered what they were. Taking one in my hand, I was just going to put a match to it,

thinking it might make a good torch, when I looked at the end of the box and saw it was labelled "dynamite." I blew out the match and crawled out with my hair standing on end.

After watching this scene I left Reinhold and Belphoebe and walked about a mile down a canyon to a corral into which the foreman and the cow-puncher had driven a whole troop of horses who now stood startled, watching. The two men had just dismounted outside, throwing their long reins to the ground. Their ponies remained standing as if they had been tied.

Outside the corral we made a small fire ; first we found a piece of resinous pitchpine, and, paring a few shavings, lighted them. Carefully cherishing these feeble flames, we fed them cautiously till they had grown into a full fire. The branding-irons which, pastorally hooked, hung from the cow-punchers' saddles, were drawn from their cases, and thrust into the fire to get hot.

Then we climbed into the corral and stood in the middle of it. The whole crowd of wild mares and horses, panic-stricken, went charging round and round it, splashing and trampling. Some slipped and crashed down in the mud, and were hardly able to struggle to their feet in the press of flying hoofs. The callow little colts, the object of the expedition, pressed in terror after their mothers. The two cowpunchers stood in the middle of the ring, with their ropes loose in their hands and ready ; they were going to perform a difficult feat of roping, to "forefoot" them.

One of the two colts, trotting with sprightly grace, was clear for a moment of the crowd. Instantly the foreman's rope, thrown under hand, flew out in front of him. But it just missed, and the open noose lay on the ground ; the colt stepped gaily over it. He threw again and missed again. He said—

“The son of a gun ! he is not going fast enough !”

He had miscalculated the pace of the little creature. The second cowpuncher now had a throw, jerking his loop out : the colt appeared to place his forefeet through it. Instantly on feeling the rope he started to fly, and the cowpuncher threw his own weight on his end of it. As the rope tightened on his forelegs the colt struggled in fright, threw up his head, then fell. He rose again, and plunged, and kicked, and whinnied piercingly. When he fell again, we flung ourselves upon him impetuously. I knelt upon his neck and the foreman dropped with a knee on his flank, and passed his tail under his kicking back leg, thus paralysing it. The second cowpuncher rapidly interlaced a rope among his feet and tied them together. The little creature lay there helpless. After a few convulsions he admitted he was overcome, and lay without a movement.

The hot iron was applied to his hip and a Diamond and Heart was branded on it. Even when his feet were released he was so subdued that he continued lying on the ground, and then slowly rejoined his mother ; she licked the new

marks of her long-legged offspring. Then we pulled the heavy bars of the gate aside, and let the crowd of nervous creatures free again.

The other two had horses to carry them back, but one of them offered to carry me behind him ; I preferred to walk back under the bare wintry branches of the high cotton-wood trees.

## CHAPTER IV

“The Winds have broken loose at length,  
And in fierce charges spend their strength.

The hills along,  
A wild headlong  
Rush they make.  
Heath and tall grass,  
As the Winds pass,  
Bend and quake.  
The saplings slender,  
Young and tender,  
Crashing break.  
The leaves, aghast  
At the fierce blast,  
Fleeing shake.

A moment on the lengthy crest  
Of the heights they rein and rest;  
For underneath them spreads the sleeping vale,  
And its long fields, and woods, and waters pale,  
And hills that in the distance melt and fail.

Their heads again  
They proudly lift,  
Their eager feet  
Impatient shift :

Then over the smooth and the infinite plains,  
They gallop off, shaking their long tangled manes.”

THE ranchman, like any other cattle-breeder, keeps constantly at work on his farm, with his men, to tend his beasts. He must brand the new calves before some interloper puts his brand on them.

He must doctor the sick, especially in the plains which, unlike the wholesome mountains, are infested with devouring parasites. For the homeless kine cannot be treated as completely wild, and cannot dispense with some care and tendance from their owner. He must keep his own cattle as much as he can within his own range, and keep other brands from feeding off it, for he has an interest, if not a property, in the precious grass. He must keep his horses within the range too, for, though they are allowed to wander loose, he must try and have them more or less at hand. The range of the Diamond Heart's, which is a small ranch, was about ten miles from end to end, cut by canyons and covered by woods. Such a farmer cannot leave his farm-house on foot of a morning, and return there of an evening. He must ride on horseback, and have a movable farm-house. So a cowman's life is in camp and with horses. Incessantly, from the spring to the autumn, the camp shifts from place to place in the range. It is a most mobile body, and its equipment the most portable and simple possible. Saddle, rope, revolver, and sometimes Winchester, you carry on your own horse. Your spare horses, your "mount," six or seven in number in the mountains, are driven in a great troop, the "remuda." Your bed, a pile of blankets in a tarpaulin, is transported from camp to camp, lashed to the back of a horse or a mule; perhaps, if you are luxurious, you shove a few pieces of under-linen and some shaving tackle into it. A small iron oven, a frying-pan, a

boiling-pot, a small axe, a sack of flour, salt, sugar, coffee, molasses, baking-powder, matches, and shoeing tackle, are put in panniers on the back of a mule. This is a "pack outfit," such as is used in the mountains, and it can be contracted to the use of two or expanded to the use of twenty men. It is the most rapid of establishments, and can cover many miles in a day. It can disappear in half-an-hour from a spot, leaving no other traces but the grey ashes of its fire. It is the most agile and manageable of bodies, as our soldiers with their clumsy waggon convoys knew when they were confronted by the elusive Boer using pack trains. It can get across country of apparently insuperable roughness, almost as straight as the crow flies. The walls of the canyon are deep and sheer; but somewhere or other the cattle have found a way down to drink at the stream at their base. Down this trail mules and horses, skirting ridges and precipices, clamber in single file, a long train.

It is only in the winter that the "work," as this moving body is emphatically called, is not out. There are usually two crops to be raised a year. The harvest of steers, of marketable bullocks, one, two, or three years old, is gathered in the spring as soon as the weather is fair enough for continuous riding, and again in the autumn before rain and snow confine the men to the wooden ranch-house. During the interval, the height of summer, the round-up is out to brand the new-born calves, produced by the heifers who are left

to increase the capital stock of the ranch. To find the inhabitants of a ranch at most times, you must search the endless woods of pine till you come to the thin blue smoke slowly curling from the extinguished fire, the beds flung on the ground, and the little heaps of rough saddlery. From that centre the foreman is making drives over the whole neighbouring country to sweep it clean of its cattle, and do whatever he needs with the bag. He was away at dawn, and will not be back with the cow-punchers till nightfall.

The sight of a mountain ranch is welcome after a long ride through the lonely woods. It lies where the canyon opens out into a level space, by its green field, ingeniously irrigated from the small creek. It consists only of a large, long house of one or two storeys, a barn, a little stable, a tool-house, and a good number of corrals. Even this rudimentary habitation is rarely occupied but by the "granger," a farming lad, and it remains nothing more than a headquarters for the cowpunchers and a storehouse of necessities—food and horse-shoes—where their camp, perpetually in motion, occasionally halts; even on these occasions they prefer to sleep outside it. A wide stretch of enclosed land surrounds the ranch, known as the "pasture." It is the stable where troops of horses nearly always wander. Inside the pasture itself, and next to the ranch, is a small field, artfully irrigated, where hay is grown out of alfalfa or some other rich and abundant grass: it is a valuable crop, carefully hoarded for the winter, when one or two horses

are kept up and fed on it. In some places a crop of Indian corn is also raised. A mule or a horse is always at hand or detained in the tiny stable : if you want a particular horse in the pasture you get on this mount and "wrangle" him, often a search of hours. This is the ranch in its natural form. It can be, and some are, elevated by their owners to the rank of a country house. But most remain at this rude stage.

In this domain the foreman is master, with absolute power to "hire or to fire," to engage or dismiss the hands, and even the absentee capitalists, in whose hands ranches so often are, bow to his authority when they are on it. To this absolute discretion is joined absolute responsibility. The position requires some talent for management and the accomplishments of a good cowman to fill it. A good cowman has fine horsemanship and skill with the rope, of course, but more than anything else, knowledge of cattle. This science, to which riding and roping are very subordinate, is slowly deposited by many experiences till it forms an instinct. He judges the number of the cattle on his range, and how many steers the owners can contract to deliver to the cattle-buyers : he estimates at a glance their condition, their quality, and their temper, either singly or in masses. He has a fine eye, and can read at a glance the sex, the age, the brands of a bunch of cattle browsing half-hidden in the brakes of a remote bluff or wrapped in whirling clouds of dust. Once seen, a cow is usually remembered by him and recog-

nised in a multitude : and a good look at a horse fixes him in his memory for ever. He can detect their hidden presence and divine their future movements : give him the poorest mount in the outfit, and he will bring back the most steers. He has an immediate grasp of a country, and of the strategy of rounding it up. Besides this "range work" round the ranch, he can conduct "trail work," taking a large herd many scores of miles through unknown country, and can choose the best way, make calculations of crucial importance, how to water and how to feed them, how far to drive each day ; take all the instant decisions and the many precautions that are required. Range cattle have a psychology. They are not domestic animals ; they are half game, and your dealings with them must have a great deal of tact and discretion. The cowman is something of the hunter and something of the farmer. To this deep cattle lore he must add a deeper horse lore. Besides being a good cowman, the foreman must bear the prime share of fatigue and risk, and retain his prestige with his men if he wishes to maintain his real authority over them. Like all those who live far from the cities of men, he must be versatile, ready to be in a rough, clumsy way, a ploughman, a carpenter, an ironsmith, a blacksmith, a builder, a hunter, an irrigator, a woodman. Not that this variety of functions ever embarrasses a cow-puncher : all solitude produces self-reliance : but there seems to be a particularly supreme form of self-confidence engendered by having stared at

a cow's tail from boyhood upwards. Besides, a foreman must be honest and trustworthy : it is a post of confidence. A good waggon-boss can consequently make something like two hundred a year clear wages, besides being boarded and mounted.

The round-up, the "work" as it is significantly called, does not begin till the spring is advanced. Till then storms of snow and rain invade the mountains and the ground is soaked and spongy, too heavy for riding on the small, grass-fed horses, and without hard riding the cattle are inaccessible. So they remain undisturbed in their solitudes. The outfit that is compelled to go out on a round-up before the ground and weather are dry is indeed miserable. Their poor horses, unnourished by the thin winter grass and exhausted with their efforts, cannot reach the cattle, or utterly fail them and sink to the ground. Their most desperate efforts yield no result, and they never get back to camp till long after nightfall, often on foot and carrying their own saddles. The rivers are in flood and at every crossing soak the riders and the mules' packs. Fatigued and frozen, they have to sleep between wet blankets and eat sodden food. Finding himself behind time and the date of delivery approaching, the pitiless foreman puts on double pressure ; he gets them up at three in the morning and makes them saddle in the dark by the light of the camp-fire, and even the cook has to take to riding. Tired and cold, without food or sleep, their best exertions fruitless, not only

does the temper of these rough men give out but they are utterly unmanned, and sink into their blankets almost sobbing.

At the end of the autumn the larger portion of the cowpunchers are dismissed till the spring, and fall back into other occupations, several of which each boasts. Without demur they become bartenders, or salesmen, or gamblers—one of the most respected and respectable professions in the West—or butchers. All occupations are on the same social level, and, to a cowpuncher, equally easy. They would not hesitate to manage a bank or a battleship, if it was offered them. The foreman and a few hands remain on the ranch during winter, where there is always "ground work," as the punchers contemptuously call any work that is not on horseback, to be done: making or mending pastures, for example, large spaces of land enclosed with barbed wire, which are scattered all over the range of a ranch. As they have the water, and the grass within them is protected, they are very convenient if, for any cause, it is required to hold horses or cattle together for some time. Corrals, again, are placed at convenient points in the woods, small, strong enclosures of bars and posts, of which the uses are numerous. In the wet season miscellaneous erections and rude constructions of this kind are made, and the tedious tasks of the farmer accomplished, ploughing in the patch of field, digging a little in the ditches that irrigate the precious meadow. The road that leads to town can always be improved, and must always be kept

open for the heavy four-mule waggon. Road-making in the West is still a rudimentary science. Its first principle is that, wherever it is possible to pass a vehicle it is possible to make a road. Its second is that, where a vehicle has been passed several times over the same place, the road is made. The public authorities carry out the public works in this simple fashion, and private individuals do not do much better. But in the mountains some banking and levelling must be done to make it passable; sometimes a huge boulder rolls down, or a great pine falls across the road where it is compressed between the steep and close sides of a canyon. Then the cowpunchers shove long sticks of yellow dynamite in their pockets to blow the obstacle up, and gallop off, shouting with joy at the prospect of the explosion. Then "freighting" goes on constantly, driving the heavy waggon with a team of four mules to town and back, a week's journey. It is going and coming nearly the whole year, especially of a winter, to bring the necessities of the ranch out. Its chief loads are salt, the heavy rock-salt the cattle require in such quantities, and corn, the grain that must be used to feed the horses employed of a winter, all very weighty and very bulky articles. The solitary freighter has difficulties of his own to cope with. Often the rut-tracks which make a Western road turn to sloughs, which tax the patience and the powers of objurgation of a professional teamster; often the waggon sinks so deep that it has to be unloaded and the contents fetched by the pack train. Down some precipitous inclines

no brake or team can hold the laden waggon, and the teamster manufactures a natural and very effective drag by cutting down a small fir and chaining it to the axle. In all these trials and other hardships of winter weather the teamster is alone with his mules. In old, settled countries roads and bridges are too common to be appreciated. They are treated like the gifts of nature, like the air itself, and the effect of their absence is not realised. But they are inventions almost divine, and without them man's life would have remained poor, brutish, nasty, helpless; for without roads and bridges he cannot use a waggon, and without a waggon he is unable to transport any objects from one place to another during most of the year. It would have remained useless for him to produce, and impossible for him to receive anything in exchange, for little of bulk can be carried on the backs of animals. They are the first condition of economic production. It is not surprising that the Romans, who invented business and laid down its rules for all eternity, set out to develop the whole world with their spades and trowels, and made their bridge-makers into the priests of their religion.

Sometimes in winter a trap is laid for a wolf, where his tracks, like those of a large mastiff, have been seen in the snow. The skin of a newly-killed beef is hung from the branch of a tree, and an iron trap is hidden in the earth below. But it is not always successful, for wolves are wary and have a keen nose for iron. They are now very common in the cattle country, where they used to

be scarce, for the arrival of the white man with his great herds of cattle has brought them prosperity. Before this revolution there was not enough food for the wolf-bitches to bring up their litters, only the occasional carcase of a deer, and starvation thinned them out rapidly; now they live in abundance and bring up large families. They are always thick in land where rolling plain meets the spurs of the mountains, for they can hunt on the level without getting sore feet, and hide in the rocks when pursued. They can kill any calf they select, and they are very destructive, murdering wantonly, for they never return to their victim, but kill afresh when they are hungry; so that the ranchers have begun a systematic campaign against them.

On big mountain ranches a wolf-trapper is employed regularly, and bounties are offered by owners and local authorities for wolf scalps; a careful rancher injects the carcase of every deer he kills with strychnine. Indeed, poison, either in this fashion or by scattering pieces of poisoned meat, is a more successful method of destroying them than trapping. Their sign is seen everywhere, and the sight of a single beast, or a band of two or three, slinking away was common enough, but they are not easy to reach. In the plains the cow-puncher will rope at the small coyote wolves, but I have never heard of their venturing to catch the "lobo" wolf, the huge timber-wolf of the mountains, a splendid animal, whose fur is as white in winter as that of a polar bear. Their peculiarities, and especially their effrontery, are curious; they like to

travel along paths and roads, leaving their dog-like tracks along them. They will howl round a lonely ranch on a moonless night of a winter, as if they knew their long, blood-curdling cry, dreariest and mournfulest of sounds, the very voice of desolation and famine, harmonised perfectly with the scene. Their very harmfulness to cattle makes them innocuous to man, for they are so grossly overfed they can hardly run away from him, far less molest him. I profited by their tameness in a rather unusual experience.

I was riding back to the ranch, in winter with the snow on the ground. My horse was taking me slowly up a narrow canyon, winding and turning, at the bottom of which there was just room for the road. As I turned one corner I saw a big animal, as large as a mastiff and looking like a white collie, come trotting down the road towards me ; its beauty in its silvery white winter coat left me for a moment breathless, and I did not immediately realise it was a lobo ; he cannot then have been more than a few yards from me. He turned back and mildly trotted off, recognising in me a possibly undesirable acquaintance. I spurred my horse, pulled my gun, and was immediately right up on him ; leaning over, I fired at him almost point-blank. My six-shooter missed fire. Bored by my unprovoked molestation, the wolf climbed up the side of the canyon. I again cocked my pistol, wheeled my horse, and fired at his flank, a huge mark, and a few yards off, and again it missed fire. He was now trotting on unconcernedly up the side of the canyon, reflecting

unfavourably on the state of affairs that exposed an innocent wayfarer in the woods like him to this kind of annoyance. I jumped off my horse to have a steadier aim at him with both hands, and took three more shots, and every time my six-shooter missed fire. Furious, I flung it open, and found every cartridge was empty. Some foolish cow-puncher at the ranch where I had stayed the night before had taken it out of my belt when by back was turned and fired it off for fun without telling me. The last I saw of the wolf he was standing on the rock far above me, looking at me and grinning good-naturedly, just like a collie dog that wants to play.

As the spring approaches and the ground gets harder, the foreman will often take a daily expedition of inspection over his range, searching for *mavericks* (unbranded calves), which he ropes and brands. This is a surreptitious piece of fine sport for him, galloping by himself after a two-year-old and catching him in the open. Heavy lumps of rock-salt, brought out in the waggon, are loaded on the mules, and carried to the salt-grounds, which are scattered all over the mountains. Presumably salt is good for animals anywhere, but it seems a necessity to those who live off fresh mountain grass. This is a lesson soon learnt when you find your saddle stock have run away at night in search of it, and you have to look for them on foot for a week. To give them salt to lick as often as possible is the best way of keeping them near camp. Even the white and black tailed deer flit down to the

salt-grounds, and cows are driven almost frantic by the want of it. These stolid matrons lose all sense of modesty in their desire for it, and have to be shooed out of camp ; in the absence of the occupants, and no doubt partly from the curiosity which torments cattle, they chew everything with a taste of salt in it. On their return these occupants find their soap and towel have gone to form the lunch of a cow. The heavy blocks of salt, flung down at the salt-grounds, diminish rapidly, and are a great domesticating influence. It is easy to drive cattle to them, who know them as a voluntary rendezvous.

In spite of these tasks the winter is a period of inoccupation, and the cattle are left to lead vagrant, undisturbed lives in their beautiful mountain valleys. It is the time for holidays in town, which is only two days off on horseback ; there the cow-puncher, extensively barbered, renounces his ragged, picturesque attire and puts on clumsy black town clothes, and hangs round a street corner, next to a saloon, staring fascinated at his new red socks. His recreations are getting drunk, losing his wages at cards, and far from delicate amours.

In the spring the ground dries and the new grass springs up, proclaimed by the loud bellowing of the bulls in the mountains. The horses are collected, the beds and food and cooking material are packed on mules, and the punchers go into camp. The easy tenor of the cattle's lives in their grassy haunts is rudely interrupted, and they are chased, roped, driven, and imprisoned in corrals. A camp-fire is the real home of cowboys, and a roof is irksome to

them. Even when under it they avoid the use of chairs, and reject all meat but their unpalatable and indigestible camp food. The walls of a ranch, into which only severe weather can drive them, are a confinement, where their spirits grow dull and yawning, and their manners hubristic. Going into camp is a release, and they regain their humour and good temper. Refractory animals and inclement weather, and untoward circumstances and boorish companions, sometimes make this life under the sky unsweet ; but it offers endless rides in lovely, sequestered vales and mountain-tops, and the inexhaustible pleasure given by these spacious scenes.

The circulation of the camp will last till next autumn. In this main occupation of rounding-up and in all other subsidiary tasks, horses and mules are the instruments. The distances make them indispensable, and Texans are, according to their own expression, born on a horse and almost forget to walk. Horses consequently fill the life of a ranch ; the attention they receive is very different from that given to an English one, whose diet and health and toilette demand such care and expense. Still, something has to be done for them ; for the rocks they have to be shod. The shoeing is of a very rude and very wholesome kind. The iron shoe is cold fitted : it is selected from a number of sizes, and, unheated, is roughly shaped to the hoof with the hammer. This, of course, does not allow of such a neat fit as a blacksmith can give, who softens his metal in the fire before he shapes it. On the other hand, no cowpuncher would cut

or pare the hoof in the stupid and cruel way most blacksmiths do, and grooms allow: he leaves it almost untouched except for a little filing with a rasp—the only humane way, though his motive is not humanitarian. His reason is that he does not want a lame horse in his mount. Shoeing is thus a constant drudgery of a ranch. Except for this attention, he has little done for him; and he combs himself by rolling, as soon as you unsaddle him, in the first patch of sand he can find. Sometimes, of course, a vicious old bull will gore him, and the deep wound in his shoulder is roughly doctored. Or he eats the poisonous “loco weed,” that strange toxic which wastes his body and disorders his brain, and sometimes kills him. But these are occasional accidents, and it is not the person of the horses that makes the demand on your time, it is the incessant search for them all over the country. In the home pasture around the ranch wander dozens of horses in search of their scanty fare. Outside it, all over the range, the others are turned loose to stray in it like the cattle; being branded like the cattle, they cannot be stolen. They are rarely lost, for nearly every horse will “run” in his own peculiar country, and return to it with singular regularity whenever he is turned out: usually they are found in groups of two or three, knit in bands of the closest friendship. This makes them easier to find, but still a disproportionate portion of one’s time is taken up hunting for a particular horse. For in spite of the large numbers used by each cowpuncher, each horse

cannot, feeding as he does on grass alone, stand long bouts of work. Each must be given a rest after a few weeks. Consequently fresh batches of horses are always wanted, and are always being collected to be driven into the ranch to replace those made thin and haggard by work; or a particular beast is wanted: for hours you ride searching his favourite haunts, watching the blazing hillsides and endless thickets, and poring over the ground till your eyes ache. At last you find the marks of hoofs fresh made on the ground, which lead you straight to some remote little canyon where your object and two of his friends stand, his head uplifted with surprise. He neighs hospitably as a new companion appears on the crest of the hill. Sometimes all the horses are turned loose in winter in some grassy, sheltered upland, and a man is posted in a horse-camp to keep them together.

This is the natural life for a horse to lead. The rocks and the slopes harden him and give him an endurance he loses on the road and in the stable. Though, of course, sore backs and girth sores are common, the effects of heavy saddles and roping, I never heard of any lameness in the hundreds of horses I came across; besides, leading this healthy life they escape the ignorant owner and the empirical groom and the interested vet. His horse is a man's best friend in the mountains, a maxim which even the unphilosophical cowpuncher can grasp, and not a toy. Their playground is also their working ground; on the steep slopes and

stony precipices where they roam cropping the grass, they also pursue the cattle. With a man on their backs they move among them with the intrepid agility of cats, and scour the sides of a mountain at which others would shudder. They cease to be the dependent and luxurious animals of civilisation, but grow self-reliant as well as hardy and frugal. The grass is thin and spare on these summits, and innumerable cattle compete with them for it. Yet most of them get no other food; they must be energetic if they want to keep fat. This struggle perhaps gives a cow pony a degree of intelligence superior to that of his more civilised brethren. A dupe and hysterical,—fortunately for us, otherwise that great mass of muscle would not allow himself to be controlled by such trivial things as reins and whips and spurs—spending his last drop of strength in your service with foolish generosity, and at other times injuring you in his panic with the most wanton folly, the horse has smaller mental powers than his companion beasts of burden the mule and the donkey: but in that life he seems to gain some of the astuteness, as well as a grain of the malice, of his colleague the mule.

Mules are also one of the rancher's most important instruments of work, on which he packs his property about. In their youth they are cursed with a diabolical perversity of character, and employ the brains they receive from the donkey side of the family to the ruin of mankind. The most meritorious will at any moment buck

their packs off, or scrape them off against a tree, or refuse to be caught, or to be loaded, or to be driven, or wheel and kick you as you unpack them, and nothing but violence, and that sometimes fails, can exorcise the devils that haunt their souls. But their old age is august and benign, and in elderly mules wisdom, and the art of breaking into corn-bins, reaches great heights. The horse element is purged away in the fire of life and experience, and they almost become pure donkeys. They almost attain the magnanimity and the serene outlook upon life of that little animal. Like him they then look upon the injuries and abuse of man with the same high disdain, face danger with the same imperturbable composure, and perform their daily task with the same comic patience.

It is in that game which makes up his work that the cowhorse shows what sense he has. He chases and drives cattle with greater zest than his master. He knows his part when the rope is in use: as soon as it has flown round the neck of the beast he fixes his feet in the ground to meet the strain on himself, and he keeps the rope, which is tied to the steel pommel of his saddle, always taut, while his rider jumps off and deals with the beast. He has so firm a grasp of the principle of never "giving slack," that a cowpuncher on a reliable horse will rope small black and brown bear: they jump off and kill him with their knives and guns, feeling perfectly confident that their pony will never let him charge them.

Only geldings are used, and this custom is in its

origin reasonable. In a "remuda" of several scores of beasts driven together, the distracting presence of a mare would cause jealous kicking and biting ; but this custom has hardened into one of the most rigid prejudices of the cowpuncher's bigoted mind, and to ride a mare or a donkey is an insufferable disgrace to him. The mares therefore are allowed to run loose on the range. Every few years a batch of wild horses is broken : a bronco-twister is hired at a high rate and stays on the ranch. His horse-breaking is a desperate struggle between man and beast, and a rapid, if cruel, method : or rather there is no resistance on the part of the horse in the proper sense of the word, but only an ecstasy of terror : it would be a great shock to any animal to be taken from entire freedom to the control of a horseman, much more so for a horse, who is by nature nervous and senseless. Most of the horses have never seen a man before, and often have to be roped and dragged into the corral. There he is again thrown violently to the ground and a rope halter, to which a long rope hangs, is fitted to his head. Their dispositions vary ; gentle creatures are sometimes found who can almost immediately be ridden bare-back ; but more usually the opposition to man is furious, and he imposes his will only by brutal violence. He simply saddles and rides him, though the successive acts of putting his blanket and his saddle and himself on the frantic creature are long and hazardous. That great mass of strength, by nature so timid that he can usually be controlled by flick-

ing him with a twig, turns into a kind of wild beast. He "pitches"—bucks, as we call it—round and round the corral, kicking and foaming: with his head down he sometimes makes for the bronco-twister to paw him, striking out with his fore-feet. The twister waits for these paroxysms to exhaust him: time and again he ropes him by the fore and hind legs and throws him to the ground. The nature of their resistance is rarely the same. Some fight for hours before they allow the blanket to touch their withers. Others stand drooping with sleepy eyes, reserving their strength till they are mounted. As soon as he touches the saddle they "swallow their heads," in the vivid Western phrase which expresses the disappearance of the head of a pitching horse between his fore-legs, and pitch and rear and kick frenziedly, sometimes bellowing with that horrible roar a horse so rarely makes.

This frantic pitching of wild horses is very different from the deliberate bucking of a vicious or overfed beast. It is an insane convulsion which often ends in his turning head over heels. Herein lies the real danger, and it is not getting thrown off but remaining on a pitching horse that is perilous. I enjoyed perfect security. When he pitches, he adds, besides, variety and complication to his movements: he is not content to jar his rider loose by coming down with humped back on legs as stiff as iron: he "weaves," whirls in the air sideways, sometimes one way and sometimes the other; or "changes ends," turning round as he rises and comes down again; or "sun fishes," inclines him-

self out of the perpendicular in the air. On a neighbouring ranch a pitching horse turned upside down in the air, and drove his unwary rider's brains out through his nose and ears.

The horsemanship of cowboys is admired, and deservedly. It is difficult to institute any comparison between it and other forms. It is as remote as possible from the delicate management of the school or heavy control of the trooper ; giving little care to direction, the puncher has a powerful mechanical aid in his large saddle, as comfortable as an armchair. Theodore Roosevelt, who has experience and perhaps authority on the subject, thinks riding to hounds a finer test of horsemanship than cowpunching, and taking a line across enclosed country more difficult than working cattle. The weight of his verdict is increased by the fact that this patriot's leanings would be to something American ; it is diminished by the fact that his own ranch lay in the Dakotas, comparatively easy land, far different from the rocks and cliffs of the Rockies. The first quality of the cow-hand is the impetuous boldness with which he rides over that awesome rough country, its gloomy canyons cut straight into the earth, hundreds of feet deep, its inclines strewn with stones and boulders thicker than the sea-shore. He races along or down these slopes, as fast as his generous pony will carry him, and spurs him up them. In his own phrase, he would "go down the cliffs of Hell after a cow, and bring her back, too." The merit no doubt is partly to be attributed

to the sure feet of the horse. Indeed, I trusted their legs much more than my own when a deep gulf below made my heart sink and my head swim : dismounted, I should have dropped on all fours and crawled. The cowpuncher also goes straight at full gallop through the "brush," close thickets of stubby live-oaks and firs with limbs projecting to knock him over, and steep treacherous ground beneath him.

Another quality is the insight they are gifted with into the temper of that strange creature, the horse, as well as judgment of his points, condition, and endurance. A Texan reads horses far better and quicker than he does men, for his familiarity with them is greater, and his intimacy, begun in babyhood, is more constant. He can go up to one and catch one who would not allow you within yards of him ; he can shoe one without having even to put a bandage on his eyes, who would kick you to pieces if you tried. He knows how to treat him when he is young, or wild, or nervous, or sluggish, to prevent him pitching, to prevent him falling when he does, how rough a country he can get over, how far he can go, and all this science is of inestimable value in a country where you are dependent on your horse every moment.

Another quality is their balanced ease in the saddle. They grow into their seats, and become demi-natured with the animal, and perform tricks of the circus on them, except that their feats have a real object. Sitting a pitching horse is only one of the tricks of this kind, to balance yourself during

the leaps and gyrations of the beast with feet and with stirrups, and with elbows to shift the weight of the shoulders. They complicate this trick in a riding competition ; while the horse goes up and comes down, the winner will take his coat off and put it on again, or take a foot out of the stirrups, or take the bridle off, or they will ride him two at a time. These are pretty scenes in an open, grassy circus, but a pitching horse, however fine the rider is, is a distressing sight in the mountains, where the furious horseman, threatened if he falls by tree trunks and steep cliffs and great boulders, curses and spurs and flogs his frantic horse. The young centaurs perform other and more graceful tricks ; they crook their legs round the big cantle of the saddle and pick up objects off the ground even when going at a good pace, a most useful and enviable accomplishment ; take a running jump on to a horse they know will start pitching as soon as they touch the saddle. Some "top hands," but of course they are rare, are quite phenomenal horsemen, and will habitually look for and select a whole mount of beasts more vicious than any English one ever can be, except some famous monsters. I have heard of them, when their horse was pitching down the side of a steep hill, and they knew that a touch of the spurs would make him turn a somersault, standing up straight in their stirrups to keep their feet from touching his sides.

As long as their horses remain only half broken, their horsemanship is likely to remain at the same high level ; but there is less fast and difficult riding

than there used to be, for the cattle have grown more gentle, as a result of a more careful and intensive system of cattle-farming. Even now they are far from being the placid creatures of our farms, and it takes a horse, and sometimes a fast horse, to get near them. At the sight of a man the long-legged creatures twist their tails, and fly off into the brush. Often they are combative; their horns are weapons, and they know how to use them.

But they are becoming gentle, for it pays to have them so. If his cattle are wild the owner can never gather his steers when he wants them, or have them fat, or use old, cheap horses, or inexpensive hands. You gentle cattle by treating them gently. Riding after them hard and roping them and all other displays are discouraged under this prudent policy. Once a steer has run away from a horseman, he thinks he has had a narrow escape from some danger, and next time he sees the horseman he gallops off again; pent inside an enclosure, he learns to view with equanimity the pony and the whirling rope. The right economic principle is to put corrals everywhere, and drive your cattle into them slowly; to ride in among terrified beasts only when they are within these posts and bars, and cannot get away. This is the modern way. In the old days there were no corrals, and the cowpuncher had to work in the open. He would chase the cattle all over the mountains, and at the very sight of a horseman they would scatter wildly in all directions. "Busting" these fugitives allowed the cowpuncher to

practise and perfect his roping—again at the cost of the owner, who suffered in the broken necks and legs of his property. These displays are now strongly discouraged, and can only be indulged in away from the sharp eyes of the foreman; and the taste for roping diminishes with the habit. At the same time English strains of blood have been introduced, and their offspring show hereditary docility. The lean, long-horned Mexican is gradually succeeded by the fat and phlegmatic Hereford or Galloway, in whose dull blood the fire of his Mexican ancestry is quenched.

In the same way the more secure conditions of actual life have made the younger generation less eminent marksmen than their predecessors, who perfected themselves, not out of gratification, but out of necessity. However, the six-shooter is still indispensable, and many occasions arise for using it. A cowpuncher shoots at everything; the prairie-dogs that pop their heads out of their burrows; any stray wolf or wild cat he may meet; the wild mares that stampede his horses; the skunk, sometimes hydrophobic, who threatens to soil his camp; all dogs when he is driving a big herd, for the very sight of one makes mountain cattle stampede. He uses it as a signal; when beasts "baulk," in our language "jib," he moves them by firing under them. If some vicious old bull chases and pursues him, he must save his horse and himself; when a wild old steer is roped, he will sometimes turn and charge, and the cowpuncher, who has usually jumped off to throw him, must save his own person.

In a stampede at night he uses his revolver as a call for help, and to turn the column of charging beasts by firing right under the leaders; if he can get the head of the column to turn round and round in a circle, technically to "mill," the whole herd will continue to revolve till they are exhausted; if they continued in a straight line they would scatter far and wide, and most of them would be lost. Considering their opportunities, the skill of cowboys with a revolver is not surprising; it is probably not higher than that of a man who shoots very much with a shot-gun. But they all have a lightning rapidity, and at close quarters aim not with the eye but by putting the index finger along the barrel and pulling the trigger with the middle. Their heavy revolver, almost a small carbine, is also an accurate weapon in experienced hands at something like a hundred yards. Those who are ambitious of expert skill, and who will spend their wages in cartridges, can display remarkable tricks, using revolvers with either hand, or doing the following kind of thing: emptying six bullets into one tree as they ride past it at a good pace; or they put two guns on the ground, throw up two cans of tinned tomatoes, pick up a revolver in each hand, and burst both tins before they can drop to the ground. Some, whom accident has usually forced to kill other men, are miraculous shots, which incidents and accomplishments almost invariably make them successful candidates for the post of town constable, or marshal as it is called. But this last class are men almost invariably of an

older generation, superior to and unlike the present cowpuncher. The change in conditions and absence of real danger, the disappearance of the open range before enclosures, the subdivision of land, and consequently a more careful system of farming, has much diminished the amount of risk and sport in their lives; their resemblance to farm labourers becomes greater and greater. They consent more and more to work on foot—to do “ground work.” Their predecessors, whose lordly boast it was that “they only knew a rope and a branding-iron,” would have stared if they had been asked to do anything so menial.

## CHAPTER V

"Thou pourest swiftly, Light,  
From numbers infinite  
Of suns and stars that fill the void immense.  
Without thy sovereign aid  
Beauty itself, thy maid,  
Had never reached the dull and helpless sense ;  
And Life, the first and eldest born,  
In everlasting dark had lain for aye forlorn.

We owe to thee each morn  
The beams that then are born  
To give their colour to the shape of things :  
To thee the golden rose  
Upon those distant snows,  
Celestial shadows of some angel wings.  
To thee the calm and smiling blue  
Of heavens that spread their beauty soft the summer  
through.

The depth of the grey sea  
Is strangely turned by thee  
Into Nymphs' coral-strewn and coloured bowers.  
The lofty liner ploughs  
A wave around its bows  
Of breaking foam, transformed by thee to flowers  
Of mystic white, like the heaped piles  
Of blossoms that in spring do crown the orchard aisles.

The sparkling gleaming tide,  
That in the heart does hide

Of gems, does from thy brilliance flow.  
 The neck and bosom high,  
 On which those jewels lie,  
 Gain their enchanting splendours from thy glow;  
 And the beloved, desired glance  
 Of eyes draws all its powers from thy sweet assistance.

O'er woodland, wild and lone,  
 And grass and brush and stone,  
 Thou spreadest a lovely net of waving shade.  
 By thy caresses  
 The trees and their fair tresses  
 Of foliage deep and soft are pleasant made;  
 The lawns as well, where lovers stray  
 At night with fingers twined to watch the shadows play.

May a spirit divine  
 Of harmony like thine  
 Inspire the form of all our thoughts and ways.  
 From our lips may all  
 The sentences that fall  
 Be clear and lovely as thy even rays:  
 And when our clouded hours are past  
 May we attain in full thy radiance calm at last."

REINHOLD and I were riding down from the ranch into Magdalena. Where one of the streams tumbled down from the mountains to dissipate itself in the plains, there was a large pond, the haunt of wild duck, and with the intention of killing some, each of us had put a shot-gun in the gun scabbard of our saddles.

The sun was driving fiercely up a fiery sky, and long before we reached the pond our faces were burning and our lips parched with heat. The alkaline dust had salted our mouths down to our throats, and we could have called on rivers to take their course down our burnt bosoms.

On peeping over the high dyke that rose up one end of the pond, we had seen a whole flush of ducks, black points on the shining water. At this sight I caught something of Reinhold's ardour and my thirst was forgotten ; receiving Reinhold's instructions, I posted myself in a thick fringe of tangled willows that overhung the bank, where I waited and enjoyed the coolness of their impenetrable shade : the water lay smoothed to transparency by the midday sun. At length Reinhold appeared, crawling on the opposite shore : according to agreement I fired first, and the whole squadron rose rattling from the water and swept towards Reinhold. His first shot he missed ; the lead seemed to glance off harmlessly from their quilted breastplates of feather ; but he worked his repeating shot-gun rapidly, and two of the charging duck were hit and fell heavily.

Then we went back and lay down again in ambush. The squadron of duck had formed into a wedge and was circling aloft. But the water could not tempt them to settle, and they vanished high into the luminous air. Reinhold rejoined me, whose single victim had fluttered off into the reeds with a broken wing : I had followed it by wading in the muddy waters and shattered it. I said to Reinhold—

“I have had a desperate hand-to-hand encounter with a duck, but I never relaxed my efforts till it had breathed its last.”

We slaked our drought at a spring, and tramped across the dust to where our ponies stood waiting.

A legion of finches would suddenly rise from the sandy furrows, and race by, and then wheel with a whirr.

Our ponies stood patiently, untied : their long reins had been dropped to the ground in front of them, which was enough to keep them at their station. We remounted, our luck gladdening us, for the three duck tied to the leather strings of our saddles were canvas-backs, equally exquisite in taste and colour. Reinhold handled their thick soft plumage in which ran all tints of grey, from black to beige. He liked shooting and was skilful; I like birds disinterestedly and prefer lying on my back and watching them through field-glasses to shooting at them. He expressed his sense of their beauty and his regret that no man had ever had the art to describe it or their flight. But this was a point I could lecture Reinhold on, and I seized the opportunity. I said—

“ You are right, they are most beautiful ; but you are wrong in thinking that no man has tried to express their beauty or the grace of their flight. Milton did. I expect he observed birds a great deal in the long solitary walks he took round Horton during the years he stayed there almost alone, and Buckinghamshire is a good country for birds, I should think. When he began to write poetry again twenty years later, his mind was stored with expressions about them, perfect examples of his consummate verbal felicity. The winged angels and their movements are his opportunity to introduce them : but, of course, it is the birds of Horton,

and not the Angels of Hell and Heaven he is thinking of when he uses them, as is so often the case in his highly reminiscent poems. Have you ever noticed how birds when they come to the ground have lighted with even balance? When those ducks came whizzing over my head, the air was certainly brushed with the hiss of rustling wings. That line carries the very sound of the act. Each duck winnowed the air with quick fan as they raced down the wind. At that time, there must have been plenty of hawks in the Thames valley, especially in the neighbourhood of Windsor Forest. Perhaps it was them, perhaps it was seagulls, he had watched from a cliff, shave with level wings the deep, then soar up to the sky, towering high, or come down, throwing their steep flight in many an airy wheel, ‘Then with expanded wing he steers his flight, incumbent on the dusky air’ suggests the heavy laboured movement of a gorged hawk. He would have liked the white hawk they have in this country, or those lordly eagles we saw hovering in the canyon over the last beef we killed. But Milton may have seen eagles in the Apennines when he was in Italy on his travels; seen them spread their sail-broad vans for flight, or slowly coming down, weigh their spread wings. I think he had only read of tropical birds, and coloured plumes sprinkled with gold, celestial ardours and gorgeous wings. Books of travel and geography were his favourite reading. What I like about the birds of this country is that they are neither garish nor gaudy like those of the tropics, nor drab and dull like those in England;

but delicately painted, in perfect taste. Even the blackbirds have a dash of scarlet at the shoulders, like epaulets, to set off the gloss of their wings."

We were now passing through a mining camp called San Rafael. It was the highest point of the rising rampart of the Rocky Mountains to which a line of railway could creep, and had the tumbled and slovenly air of a mining camp. The wooden houses were rickety and scattered, the earth everywhere violently cut open and flung in heaps. Just at the entrance of it we stopped to look at two little forts built by the Spanish, somewhere about the time of Queen Elizabeth. They were made of sun-dried mud, "adobe," not much larger than a comfortable room, with thick walls, and loopholes adapted to the crossbow. We thought with wonder of these splendid Spanish, with sonorous names befitting their exploits, who, with horses and crossbows, had pushed on over immeasurable distances from Vera Cruz, into a country which Americans, armed with rifles and railroads, had hardly penetrated three centuries later. There cannot have been more than a handful of them, judging from the size of the forts. They must have looked rather like cowpunchers: worn the same elegant sombreros, ridden the same saddle, with high cantle and pommel, and with the same seat, and looked as ragged. But they wore glittering breastplates. The burning sun struck the shining steel as they slowly rode across the endless, dusty plains, and the winding canyons of the mountains excited them. At every turn they expected to see

white cities roofed with gold, filled with mild Indian men and gorgeously feathered maidens. These unknown, forgotten worthies consoled themselves for their sufferings in the confident thought that their names, blown with a long blast in the trumpet of fame, would be in the ears of all posterity.

We, who knew well the solid fortress of mountains from which we were descending, appreciated the skill that had placed the two little forts to command this gate into them. Three centuries before the Spaniard had been a superhuman being, almost claimed the globe as his heritage. Now his last two colonies had just been torn from him. As we went on I commented upon this fall.

"That country is corrupt from one end to another. There is no Spanish official that does not take bribes."

"It is curious," Reinhold said, "that you should assign corruption as the cause of their decline. For I suppose no country had grown so vigorously during the last century as the United States; it looks as if it would be called upon in the next to decide the disputes of Europe and Asia; but I suppose that in no other country, at no other time, has public corruption flourished so luxuriantly. This could hardly be denied; it is not only flagrant, open, and avowed, but it is the principle of the system. Yet corruption has rather invigorated than drained the country. Or perhaps the fate of nations is unaffected by their government. Spain would decay under a line of Peels, and the States prosper, as they do, under a Tammany President."

At San Rafael copper was mined. Almost every mine and every piece of land was owned by a corporation originally formed on the other side of the continent, to exploit oil-fields. It also owned the only store, the only restaurant, the only sleeping-house. If any employee dealt with any other store, restaurant, or sleeping-house, he was immediately dismissed. The monopoly of this Trust was universal and complete. We were lost in astonishment at the grip of this tentacle, and its reach.

Reinhold and I, who both had some acquaintance with history, both had experienced the same feeling of surprise from what we saw in America. We both knew something of the history of the last hundred years, of the expectations and prognostics of its political leaders and prophets ; Reinhold especially, who had been fed on the purest milk of German Liberalism. Their miscalculation and error filled us both with equal astonishment, and even I had just sufficient information to understand how really unexpected and unforeseen the condition of things in this country was. To some the establishment of this political system of government, of universal elections, universal representation, universal suffrage, universal voting, seemed to be chaos and end. They had proved wrong in the most signal fashion, and the people living in this democracy enjoy as fair measure of happiness as any government can give. Others, the devotees of the Liberalism which got the upper hand in all civilised countries, were entitled to

expect that it was here that the opening of the millennium would take place; and even if the happy age that was to run its course here was not to be completely golden, at least there could be no doubt to them that the will of the people, good or bad, and they thought it must be good, was to prevail. Elsewhere it was frustrated and impeded by mediæval survivals and immemorial habits, and by all the powers of reaction. Here these impediments had never existed and it would have full play; the government of the people would be by the people for the people. This result was inevitable: these masses were armed with every weapon, offensive and defensive, that could be given to them; in their hands was put the election of every public authority, legislative, executive, and judicial, local and central, from sheriff to President: chance assisted the plans of man by putting them at a level of wealth no masses have ever reached before, and diffusing a greater zeal for education, proved by a greater expenditure for that purpose, than in any other country. Here at least, for better for worse, people were to be masters. None could doubt this: Eldon and Metternich with execration, Lasalle and Mazzini and Guizot and Gladstone with enthusiasm, would all have agreed on this point: and this great question was not an academic one, trifling and unconsidered; but the two or three generations that preceded ours thought, talked, struggled, and even died, for one side or the other. Yet the real result, plainly visible to us, was anticipated neither

by the opponents nor by the supporters of this political arrangement: this unlimited democracy is a comfortable and ordinary government; it has produced neither chaos nor a golden age, but one indisputable outcome of the system at present, is the utter and complete helplessness of the masses. It is a government of the people by millionaires for millionaires. This impotent giant of ninety million people rolls, and groans, and hurls curses at its Wall Street masters, but it must obey them and sweat to pile up their wealth. He has everything that can be given him, votes and bank accounts and schools, and he is more enslaved than his most feudalised European ancestors.

I reflected that the prediction of such a result would have seemed to our grandfathers a puerile paradox, and wished it could have been communicated to them; not to spite, but to console them. As the dearest ideas of men are forgotten and rarely even understood by their grandsons, it should comfort them for this oblivion to realise their ideas were absolutely and completely mistaken and erroneous; besides, it was a moderating and calming thought, that in all probability our most valued political ideals may be as much a mirage as theirs. Reinholt distressed himself over it. He had been brought up to think of elective institutions as a promised land, and he was irritated to find it so much like the old wilderness; besides, it shook the foundation of the numerous political schemes he possessed for the regeneration of mankind, and roused the uneasy

thought that his panaceas might be as delusive as the old ones.

We talked over the condition of San Rafael in the hands of the Standard Oil Trust, and I suggested that Trusts owed their existence to the Tariff. Reinhold shook his head: he had the solution of this as well as of all other problems, and began—

"The evils this country suffers from are not fiscal, but juridical. Lawyers have caused it. Between the actual facts and the legal theory there is a direct conflict, as so often happens, and we groan under the consequences, though we do not see the cause. The actual fact in this case is that this nation is a nation: it inhabits one country, has one language, has a national sentiment: its economic unity is complete and perfect. But this is not the constitutional theory: by law this nation is not a nation. It is a federation. It has no proper central State power, but only has States, and besides these States a Federal government. From this prime cause, this deep opposition of what is and what is supposed to be, proceeds this Trust evil, and all the evils connected with it, the disorder and the injustice and the corruption."

"For the first time in history private joint-stock companies have been seen which are more powerful than Sovereign States, though these be girt with all the omnipotence of the modern legislative sovereign. None of these small countries, Oregon or the Dakotas, are capable of struggling against Standard Oil, which has cowed those who, like

Kansas, have tried. In its revenues and in its population, in the ability of its statesmen and the energy of its subjects, Standard Oil is really the larger power, and any other issue of a contest would be unreasonable. It is of course a whale among companies, though many others, especially the railroads, are nearly as big fish.

"Part of the work of a government is to restrain the exorbitant rapacites of the individual, either men or companies, and the theory of the Constitution delegates these, and the other duties of government, to the State Legislatures : they are incapable of performing them ; they are too weak for their high functions, and should only have the petty and restricted duties of local bodies. This would have suited the facts, which is that the so-called States are really local areas. This is indisputable in the West, where they have no local patriotism and no real national feeling, and even in the old States, which, like Virginia, once boasted of them, these sentiments have greatly diminished. But the legal theory makes what are really nothing more than administrative areas into independent nations. On the other hand, this single country needs a central omnipotent Sovereign, like any other. But the legal theory does not give it one. It only gives it a Federal government which has the strength and the situation to perform the duties required from the State, and which could repress these and all other disorders. It could too have bitted the Trusts and the Railroads, or rather it would have broken them in when they were still colts. But

the Constitution has not given it this task ; it has only given it a few and restricted duties ; in fact, it was originally intended to be a kind of congress, a kind of Concert of these united States, nothing more.

"Like other places where the State does not exist, this country is in a condition of anarchy, joyful, prosperous, exuberant, but still anarchy. The individual, or that terrible fictitious individual, the Corporation, has no check on his appetites. It is unfortunate that their constitution was drawn up by English lawyers, or men steeped in the traditions of English Law. They were content to piece together a working arrangement for the moment, without inquiring into the past or providing for the future. They had as few principles as the law they studied, no theory of States, sovereign and semi-sovereign, and their mutual relations in a Confederation, no scientific grasp of these difficult political subjects."

We had now gone far on our journey and were soon to leave the mountains. At last our ponies scrambled up among the loose stones of a low ridge. Then, suddenly, the whole infinite plain stretched in front of us, to the farthest reach of sight, silent and motionless under the marble air. It was undulated like the sand of the sea-shore, as if a great ocean had ebbed over it slowly in gigantic rollers.

I was familiar with the sight, and it did not interrupt the train of reflections raised by Reinhold's explanations. The topic was an old battle-field

between us, and I was better prepared to meet his omniscience on this ground than on any other. I tried to reply to him—

“ You are unfair to the framers of the Constitution ; you will hardly deny that the arrangement they drafted fitted very well the facts as they then existed. The thirteen original States were really separate countries, with a strong sentiment of their own, a character and a patriotism of their own ; the proof of this quasi-nationality still persists in ordinary language, the most unimpeachable witness ; the substantive a Virginian, for example, means something. These little countries would not have endured any interference stronger than that which was allowed to the original Federal government, and it was only with difficulty that they could be given even this slight unity ; as it was, there was so little real union among them that no common appellation could be found for them all, and to this day this country is nameless ; it is called the United States of America, which is not a name, but a phrase.

“ Circumstances have changed since then ; but why blame those able men because they did not foresee the rapidity or the issue of these changes ? few of the new States have any of this local nationality ; they have, as you say, no real political divisions : the word Wyomingite, for example, unlike Virginian, does not exist because it would have no meaning. But it is not just to ask statesmen to pierce a century into the future, or even to look forward much beyond their generation. How, for

example, could they foresee the invention of the railroads which really hooped this country together? They could not anticipate, or even speculate upon this ultimate unity: and, if they had indulged in speculation, they might with reason have guessed a different issue, separation and not union. Unity was, after all, only achieved after a long struggle, and the greatest of civil wars, and the flowing of torrents of blood. When this destiny became clear, these lawyers you despise have applied themselves to the best of their abilities to remedy this great constitutional defect, and, I think, not unsuccessfully. They have twisted and turned the Constitution out of all shape to suit the new conditions, and given the President and the central machinery a position that none but an English Common Law lawyer could call legal, so, after their own fashion, making the best of an impossible situation. It is fortunate too they are more versed in the business of the law than in its theories, more practitioners than jurisconsults: otherwise they could never have violated the clear text of the Constitution with such complacency, and put forward with such simplicity legal fictions so gross and palpable. When President Cleveland, himself a lawyer, marched Federal troops into Illinois to suppress the strikes without even consulting its Government—a proceeding which would have inflamed even Hamilton with indignation—and justified this intervention on the grounds that postal deliveries in Chicago were delayed a few hours by the riots, and that the Constitution laid

upon him the duty of protecting the mails, he vindicated with brilliance the practical genius of the English Law. It was a splendid quibble. Cleveland, when circumstances required it, treated the Sovereign State of Illinois as no more than an administrative area, which is what it is not, and himself and the Federal government as the State, which they ought to be. He rode over the anarchists, who had the government of Illinois in their hands, and checked the excesses of their followers. Such are the benefits mankind can derive from an enlightened chicanery. You may be sure, whenever it is necessary, that the Constitution will always be violated with the same statesmanlike courage. So if lawyers have caused these evils, they can cure them, and they will. But I am glad that in Britain the public business can be carried on without having to resort to these sophistries."

As we trotted along, devils of sand rose from the ground and danced round us, and vanished again; the solitude of the plain was only broken by a waggon and four horses afar off, diminished to the size of a nut-shell, creeping along in a small cloud of bright dust.

"I doubt," answered Reinhold, "whether you do not suffer rather in the same fashion and for the same reason. You boast of the illogical and unphilosophical character of your law, and other institutions, but it inflicts many evils on you. For if the study of theories and abstractions is disdained, yet they are lavishly dealt in; the Standard

Oil, the State of Wyoming, the Union Pacific Railroad, the United States of America, are abstract personages, legal and fictitious, different from the members who compose them, yet no attempt was ever made to distinguish and define these different juridical concepts, or to fix their powers, functions, and relations. This would be mere talk and useless, purposeless; yet a little more philosophy would have been a great deal more practical. A Sovereign State is not a corporation that should be called into existence carelessly, yet during the nineteenth century they have been turned out here like hot cakes, and left to find their place in a complicated Federation for themselves. No provision was ever made for the likely occurrence that some, like the Western States, would find a Federation too loose, or others, like the Southern States before the Civil War, too tight. They were left to muddle it out somehow, and are paying a heavy price.

"So, too, the English Law has indolently allowed commercial corporations, like Standard Oil and its fellow-brigands, to come into existence as easily as human beings; indeed it makes it easier to produce these fictitious persons than real ones. Yet no chimera of a diseased imagination is more terrible than a corporation which has no moral responsibilities—none of the innumerable internal checks imposed on the greed of a living man—no conscience, no morals, no soul to damn and no body to kick. To let loose these monsters unregulated and in troops into civilised society was a terrible deed, and some of them have swollen and

grown to such a size that all have now realised it. The Roman Law, more profound and conscious, shrank with horror at the idea of such legal monstrosities, and sternly suppressed even an innocent corporation of Bithynian firemen."

I could not make out quite what Reinhold was driving at, and I was out of my depths in these philosophical considerations, but I asked—

"Then why don't we suffer from the same kind of thing in England, if all this is the fault of the English Law?"

This question gave him a fresh impetus; he replied—

"On the contrary; you do much worse. Your contempt for political philosophy is deeper, and the results far more glaring. You have yourself committed exactly the same mistake, though with less excuse, for its consequences were visible over here if you had cared to look at them. Your Empire, like this one, is also a Confederation, an aggregate of corporations; when you gave your colonies self-government you made them into sovereign corporations, and your politicians similarly neglected to provide the means by which the unity of the Confederation could be increased, if its members required it. With a greater knowledge of the past and the greater prescience of the future it gives, they could easily have made provisions for this contingency; now it is almost impossible to change the existing relations. So you are exactly in the same difficulty; the obstacles to closer union everywhere are due to want of science in your

schemes. Both countries would have avoided this, and many other evils, if they had had a proper theory of corporations, public and private."

"Oh ! oh !" I objected, "a defective jurisprudential theory like that cannot make all that difference. You exaggerate ; it is impossible."

"I don't," was his reply. "It has inflicted endless harm on you. It has made the great revolution you have attempted in England in the last quarter of a century, and next to which most of your political changes are trifling, an almost entire failure ; by that revolution I mean that entire change in your method of local government and its transference to elective bodies, corporations again. At random and in swarms you created taxing and spending corporations—scores and thousands of them—without troubling to define, adjust, or control them. To these natural prodigals, unions, municipal councils, school boards, guardians, burial and local boards, highway committees, boards of health, county councils, lighting committees, water and paving boards, sanitary authorities, boards of works, pier commissioners, common councils, asylum boards, and many others, you opened wide the purse of the citizen : in the last quarter of a century they have taken more out of his pocket than it took to defeat Napoleon. You carried your contempt of logic and theory so far that in some places an Englishman could be taxed by thirty-five separate local authorities. Yet with a little more reflection, a clearer definition, a more exact control of these public corporations, more of

this jurisprudential theorising you despise, and this result would have been avoided. You would have realised that fictitious, irresponsible, unregulated persons ought not to be called to life so carelessly: but to what extravagances will not the passion for being practical lead you? There are more curious things in your history than the disorders of your local government. For more than a century you left the rule of India—of a whole continent of hundreds of millions of men, of many races and religions—in the hands of a trading company; allowed a whole empire, as if it was a grocery, to be run by a board of directors. To permit a commercial trust like Standard Oil to grow into an independent kingdom is surely less fantastic than deliberately to leave a continent of kingdoms in the hands of a body of merchants like the East India Company."

Darkness was now swallowing up the plain, and a cold wind met us. Magdalena, still distant, began to light its lights; our brave little ponies seemed to guess the goal was near, and moved with fresh alacrity.

## CHAPTER VI

I HAVE been staying for a few days on the T. J. Ranch belonging to a wealthy American, which enjoyed some of the comforts and amenities of life—sheets, pictures on the wall, jugs and basins, a pianola, and even a telephone whose wire, flung across the mountains for scores of miles, connected him with town. Two other ranches had taken advantage of this last great convenience to fix themselves on this long wire too. One was an active centre of life, the other was deserted by its owner except when he used it as a hunting centre. In his absence it was occupied by an old man, wizened and ugly, with a wooden leg, whose duty it was to guard it from thieving Mexicans. His real name, as with most of the other people in the country, was unknown to me, but his Christian name was George; according to the fixed ways of cowpunchers in the case of a wooden-legged man, the prefix of Peg-leg was given to George. The ragged old creature had been born in England, and even remembered having seen the Derby; he consequently acknowledged me as a compatriot, and would hail me whenever I rode past his place, which lay not far from T. J.'s. Debasement was stamped upon all his features, and he had an evil

air, which even his appearance of weakness and poverty could not dissipate. But Peg-leg George was cordial, and always offered me some of the large and exquisite grapes which grew on the place and which did not belong to him. I was not insensible of these merits.

The foreman of the T. J.'s had asked me to "hold it down" by myself as the outfit were away on the "round up." So I was alone, except when a traveller made the place a stage for the night. To my great pleasure a United States officer engaged on a military survey of the country had halted there. After the boorish ways of the cow-punchers, his company, though he had no great distinction, seemed exquisite. The choicest conversation, the most polished manners, had never given me greater pleasure. Further, a prospector had asked me if he could stop there a short time, till his horse had regained his strength; he was welcome too, for he was interesting; a man of superior intelligence who had used as much as he could the opportunities for education his country lavishly places before the poor. His determination was to succeed, and emerge from his own level of life. He had tried every road, and his versatility rose above even the high Western level, but though he had by now gone half-way across life, wealth was still out of his reach. He had fixed his ambition on a gold-mine, and was now engaged in the fascinating pursuit of prospecting for gold, wandering alone in the mountains with his horse and Winchester, poring over the rocks and the streams.

I had once met him before and was attracted by his eloquence, for, unlike most men of his kind, he could tell with art the episodes of his *Odyssey*.

We three were alone at the T. J.'s and had, after the work of the day, gone to our beds soon after the sun. In the depth of the night I was suddenly awakened by the telephone-bell ringing convulsively again and again. The sound was so wild that not only did I get out of my bed and run to the telephone, but the officer and the prospector did the same. I took down the receiver and halloo'ed, and heard a despairing voice say—

"For God's sake come and help me."

"Who is it?" I asked.

"It's me," the voice answered, "Peg-leg George."

I was astonished, and said—

"What are you ringing up for at this time of the night?"

He repeated his urgent appeal, and added—

"I have killed a Mexican and I want to get away."

In spite of the danger and the acuteness of the crisis, my personal knowledge of George led me to say instantly—

"George, are you drunk?"

But he was in too great a distress of mind to take offence at my sincere and spontaneous question, and he told us in a broken and distracted voice what had happened to him. The obscurity of his account was increased by the defective state of the telephone. Peg-leg George entertained, as I knew, hostile relations with one or two Mexican families living higher up the river, poor peons

escaped from the quasi-slavery of Mexico, wretches who, in their rickety cabins, lived miserably off a patch of corn and beans. George despised them, for he was poor, and they were poorer, and he assumed besides a true Texan insolence toward a man of another colour. He was full of the confidence given him by the possession of firearms, which they had not. George, on the other hand, stumping about on his wooden leg with his evil face, did not inspire them with respect, and their inclinations were predatory. This I knew, for often when I had stopped to speak to him as I had rode by, he would complain about them in a wheezy tone and use threats. He was a boaster, and the cowpunchers hit on this characteristic in the story they told of how this little old man, whenever he went to town, used to stalk armed into a saloon and shout in the style of the old-time bad man : "I am Rattlesnake George ; line up to the bar!" It was likely that he and his neighbours would come to blows some day.

His story through the telephone was not connected, but he was not very audible. We gathered that a party of Mexicans had come to his house, and that after a dispute he had shot one. The causes and the incidents of the fight we could not penetrate in the midst of his terror and despair, but his excitement to get away was overwhelming and justifiable. The other Mexicans, he declared, had gone off to collect their friends and would be back some time that night to avenge the victim. He was single and almost helpless, and he implored me

to bring him a horse. He had but one old jade who was out loose on the hill and impossible to find in the dark. With his wooden leg he could not hope to retreat in that vast country by walking : at daylight the Mexicans on horseback certainly would take up his trail like sleuth-hounds and overtake him immediately. He realised his only hope of safety lay in reaching an American county, as he told us through the 'phone. There he would be safe. This was a lucid reflection on his part, and destroyed my still lingering suspicions of his sobriety, but it requires explanation. The T. J. Ranch lay in a Mexican county, that is to say, the majority of the elected officials were Mexicans. The corruption which in most of America is an integral part of the political institutions has been adopted by the Mexicans with the rest of the American system. With the naïveté of the Indian, and perhaps the logic of the Latin, the Mexicans had carried the principle one step further. The politicians in an American county recouped themselves in office for the contribution they had made to their party funds, a rule the evil of which is much diminished in practice. They gave the public a tolerable amount of fair, if expensive government. But the Mexican politicians were not content either to take as little or to give as much ; mere embezzlement and bribery was too poor a return for their efforts. They were uncompromising, and carried the principle to its conclusion with mathematical rigour, and the successful party appropriated and divided the totality of the proceeds of local taxa-

tion, which was heavy to a degree unparalleled to my knowledge. This application of public money left little or nothing to spare for schools, or roads, or any work of public utility. Even the sittings of the courts were suspended for periods of years for want of funds. Thus the peril which overhung George was double. The Mexicans might return properly equipped and exact an immediate and bloody settlement from George. On the other hand, they might take the more dreadful resolution of observing the forms of the law, and, fetching a Mexican deputy-sheriff, duly arrest him. This was a still worse fate in prospect. His destiny would be, unless his friends could collect the money to obtain his release from the authorities, to languish in a foul prison, untried for years, till he died of fever, or, if he got a trial, to be dragged before some partial Mexican jury impanelled by a hostile Mexican sheriff. From the dangers of murder, and the still greater danger of arrest, he would be secure if he reached some neighbouring white man's country, into which neither the avengers of blood nor the Mexican police would presume to follow him. I almost thought I could hear the sobs in his voice through the telephone as he reiterated his request for a horse.

After a short consultation we decided to go to his assistance. Custom had hardened us against the inconvenience of a broken night, but we were not altogether pleased.

The officer said—

“It is a nuisance, but we may have some fun.”

The prospector remarked—

“Why can’t they have their ranch held down by some son-of-a-gun with more sense than that.”

We dressed, and, at his suggestion, taking our Winchesters with us, we clattered across the wooden veranda into the open air. A heavy wrack of clouds was rolling across the sky, and the light of the large open space in front of the ranch was dim. A number of our horses were in a corral which had troughs of hay at the side. We each caught one and saddled in the dark; I also selected for Peg-leg George a horse of my own which was in a condition to go far and fast, and made with a rope an impromptu halter to lead him.

George’s habitation lay some miles up the river. The Gila, already a considerable stream, here rolled with many turnings in a winding and typical canyon. Both the sides of the canyon rose up plumb straight, like houses on each side of the street, sometimes separating to make the canyon as broad as a boulevard, sometimes closing to make it a narrow lane. These sheer cliffs reached far up. Their yellow and red colour, and the fantastic shapes into which their tops were worn, gave them an uncouth appearance even in the light of day; they not distantly resembled savage Aztec idols, smeared with yellow ochre and blood, from whose tops hundreds of captives were hurled into the void, while naked priests howled and slashed themselves with knives. At night they looked even more grim. Riding at the bottom of this deep funnel we could see little in the darkness but their

gloomy outlines and the hurrying press of clouds. At our sides ran the swift glimmering waters of the Gila, and their sound rang in our ears; at intervals we crossed and re-crossed it, for it swung from side to side in its narrow passage. Fortunately the safe crossings, often traversed by day, were familiar to me and my own horses, to show the way. But even with this example there was some hesitation on the part of my companions' horses, rightly wary of quicksands in unknown places, to descend into the dark rushing flood that came up to their shoulders.

At length, and it must have been past midnight, we reached a sudden bend of the canyon, on the other side of which lay the scattered buildings occupied by George. In our youthful imprudence the officer and myself were hastening to round it, but the prospector checked us. He was a man of experience, and pointed out the evident risk of our action. The return of the Mexicans was expected by George, and they were coming from the same direction as we. The sound of horses and voices coming up the stream would put him on his guard, and he might not in his fear be able to make distinctions; one of us or our horses would be hurt before we could identify ourselves. However, George knew my voice; so, straining my lungs to the utmost, I shouted to him repeatedly. After some time, receiving no answer, we moved forward again, separating our group to offer less of a target.

The ranch had been built without much judgment at a point where the canyon broadened, but not sufficiently to allow the proper amount of

space. In this cramped room several buildings and outhouses huddled together. Their black masses now rose before us, but no human being came to meet us. We shouted again and again. No light shone, nothing moved. A solemn silence reigned over the whole scene.

We dismounted. Our perplexity was great, and we felt some apprehension. The desertion, or the apparent desertion of the ranch was inexplicable, and under the circumstances might well alarm us. What had become of Peg-leg George? He had certainly telephoned to us from this very place not much more than an hour ago. Had he given way to his fears before our arrival, and fled under cover of the dark to hide in the thickets? In that case he would not be far off, and he would have given us some sign in return. If he was still on the ranch, the silence was ominous. We might be too late. Besides, those dark buildings might conceal an ambush, to which its corners and recesses were very favourable. The noise we had made as a signal to Peg-leg George was a warning to the Mexicans. They had had time to prepare, and that blank darkness might conceal a trap into which we should fall on entering the yard. Still, we could not in honour turn back; George's own life, of little value as it was, was perhaps ebbing out there slowly from the gash of some Mexican knife.

In this situation the nerves of the officer, and certainly my own, were tense with excitement, agitation of a kind which, though it shoots you like an arrow to the mark, if that mark is clear, is

neither resourceful nor ingenious. The prospector was reflective and collected, and while we stood wavering, with veteran coolness lifted his corpulent person into the saddle and said—

“Let’s pull our freight. If these Mexican sons-of-guns are here, we’ll get at them another way.”

We yielded to his command without question, and followed him back some distance clattering over the stony bed of the canyon the way we had come. This was his plan, which he unfolded to us. As being acquainted with the ground, and qualified as a guide, I was to return with him on foot, making a wide circuit, and approaching the ranch by the back. If a plot lay hidden, our approach would take the plotters by surprise, and from an unexpected quarter. The officer was to remain, so to speak, in reserve, within hearing, and holding the horses. If we were hurt or worsted he could ride back, and along the telephone wire summon from town medical and armed assistance which would reach us before midday. We left our Winchesters behind, as being awkward and cumbersome in rooms and passages. The prospector, who had not brought any other weapon, borrowed the long service-revolver of the officer and filled his pockets with cartridges. I had dangling at my side the common Colt ‘45, admirable in the simplicity of its mechanism, the convenience of its size, and its formidable carriage of six bullets as big as a thumb. Acting on his advice and following his example, I cocked and uncocked it to see its workings turned smoothly: I also took

off my long spurs, which I had mechanically put on with my boots and which were likely to trip me, and hung them on my saddle-horn.

The circuit we were obliged to make was long and uneven, and involved getting out of the canyon to enter it again farther up. In the glimmering light we scrambled up the narrow trail that crept along the face of the cliff, up rocky slopes, through embarrassing thickets of oak and juniper, and we stumbled down again on similar ground. As soon as his direction was clear my fat companion led me, for his business inured him to walking, while I had lately affected to a degree of extravagance the cowpuncher's habit of being on horseback for every purpose. As we drew near again from the other side to the lifeless, mysterious ranch we moderated our pace. Touching his shoulder, I silently pointed out to him with my hand the place where a spur of the hill was thrown out, covered with thickets, almost up to the main building. He understood me and nodded, and began creeping slowly and with care in that direction.

In spite of our attention we could not avoid disturbing stones, in our heavy cumbersome boots, as we moved along the slope of the rough and stony soil. The sullen and muffled voice of the river, murmuring against the sides of the canyon, perhaps prevented the Mexicans hidden in the ranch from hearing us, but even if they had, they gained no advantage. The darkness, which had concealed them, now concealed us as well. Indeed,

I realised that we now occupied the superior position. I had a perfect confidence in the ability of my companion with the weapon he carried. A few days before, as he had got off his horse to arrange a barbed-wire gate, I had looked up and seen two grey squirrels, with immense bushy tails and vivacious black eyes, on the high branch of a cotton-wood tree ; I had remarked upon them, and almost before I had finished speaking he had brought them down with his pistol, shattered and dead. The flash of the first Mexican shot would fatally betray their position to him, while we remained invisible, or at least obscure and uncertain. As for myself, regarding my marksmanship with full and justifiable mistrust, I was determined to reserve my fire till I had something of the dimensions of a haystack within point-blank distance. Our offensive too, with its freedom of movement, relieved our nerves. The prolonged, confined defensive on which our opponents were kept would be a strain to unsteady them in the dark, unreliable marksmen and inaccurate as Mexicans always are, being too poor to buy cartridges to practise.

Our approach was undetected, or at least no change of position on their part was audible to us. The scene before us remained as motionless and as inscrutable as before. The prospector had now reached the end of the covert, along which we had stalked. In front, between him and the main buildings, lay an open flat space, now moderately well lighted, for the sky had cleared. Rising suddenly and pulling his gun, he moved

across it swiftly to the wall of the main building, along which he began to creep stealthily. He was unattacked, and after a few moments I followed his example with the same impunity. With circumspection and care we tried every door and window ; but it was entirely closed, and apparently unoccupied. After using the same prudence on some outhouses and barns and obtaining no other result, we grew more careless and began kicking at the doors and shaking the windows and shouting for Peg-leg George. Hearing us, where he had been waiting for the delivery of our scientific attack, the officer joined us, leading our horses. There could be no doubt that the Mexicans were not in occupation of the ranch, but the existence of George and his whereabouts was as much a problem as ever. His sudden disappearance, after that wild outcry on the telephone, wore a sinister air, and we could not resolve ourselves to go away without finding a solution. So we continued our clamour and researches, and the prospector poured with easy fluency a stream of invective on George and his parentage calculated to touch him even if he had been dispatched to the other world. We determined at last to defer our search for his body till day. To look for it in that absence of light was useless, and we prepared to take our departure. The officer had already mounted his horse, when I thought I heard, inside a small closed cabin, a low moan. The door was locked and I listened at it intently. I thought I heard it again, and communicated my impression

to the others. They joined me and put their ears to the door. There could be no doubt that there was a human being within. A low moan, like that of a feverish delirium, was now quite distinct.

The officer asked—

“Who is that in there ?”

He received no answer, neither did the prospector who addressed him in Spanish. The wounded man seemed insensible or too weak to speak. We could still without interruption hear his sighs and heavy breathing. As the door was locked from the inside, we decided to break it open to assist him, whoever it was, who found himself in so strange a position, and we had begun to look for a beam when we heard the man drag himself with difficulty and effort to the door. He groped and fumbled at the key, groaning, but at length unbolted it. The door was pushed open, and there against its stile leaned George, untidy, dishevelled, but showing us at once by his slobbering and relaxed features that he was very drunk.

We were relieved and might have been amused at the unconscious trick played on us, if Peg-leg George's debased features had been less repulsive. As I knew him I spoke to him, and sharply, but could get no coherent remarks from him. He talked on in a vinous, irrelevant babble. At length I said to him—

“What about that Mexican you shot? what is the meaning of it?”

This seemed to put some light into his clouded

mind, and he repeated to us what he had spoken through the telephone with the same vehemence, though, if that instrument had not been in defective order, we would have detected in his voice and superfluous sibilants of his speech decisive proof of his condition. He explained that some Mexicans driving by in a waggon had taunted him, and that he had shot one with his shot-gun. In his condition it was not improbable.

I asked—

“Where is he, this Mexican of yours ? ”

He yelled with an oath—

“He’s in the corral ; he’s lying in the corral.”

All our philanthropic feelings had so far been wasted on George, and it was time to spend some of them on his victim. In the cabin, on the table, lay a demijohn of whisky, and leaning against it was a huge repeating shot-gun, but there was also a lantern which, at the suggestion of the prospector, I lighted to assist me in finding the corpse. The officer stayed, holding the horse, and the prospector guarding George. I had gone half-way to the corral to carry out my investigations when I was seized with misgivings. The victim might not be quite dead, and, after lying in the cold with a charge of shot in him, venomous and still able to sting. He might not do justice to my motives, or be able to distinguish between myself and his murderer. For the second time in that night of peril I drew my gun and, stepping slowly, threw the light of the lantern carefully in front and around me as I advanced. My circumspection and

my charitable intentions were alike lost. The corral, diligently examined by me, was empty and undisturbed.

I returned to the group in a state of irritation. Being resident at the T. J.'s I was the virtual host of the officer and the prospector, and that their night should have been destroyed by the folly of this dotard annoyed me. Resentment at having been duped before them increased my annoyance. Peg-leg was sitting at the table inside the dark cabin with his head in his hands, moaning. I told the others there was nothing in the corral, and that we had better go home; then putting the lantern on the ground, in front of the door, I strode into the cabin, seized the demijohn, and said—

“George, I am going to take this away from you. You have given us too much trouble with it tonight.”

My motives in doing this were mixed; irritation formed part of them, and I wished to prevent old Peg-leg from further besotting himself. In his frenzy he might set fire to the ranch, or commit any other kind of outrage; but the prospective loss of his treasured bottle roused him from the tearful lethargy which had come over him, to a paroxysm of fury. At the sight of his anger the others were of opinion that I had better restore it to him, and I had put it down on the ground next to the lamp outside, wavering what to do. We were standing in front of the door when Peg-leg, his little face convulsed by rage, appeared at the door of the cabin with his huge shot-gun, and yelled—

"I'll shoot the guts out of you," and lifted his weapon to do so.

I was on one side of the door, and my companions on the other. As he stepped out he turned towards them, threatening them with the muzzle. With promptitude they vanished round the corner of the cabin. George had his back to me, and his bleary eyes, coming out of the dark, were dazzled by the sudden rays of the lamp. He did not see me for the moment, as he stood blinking his venomous little eyes, but I had no intention of giving him the chance to put his menaces into execution, or satisfy his drunken vindictiveness on our innocent horses, who were standing in front of him. Diving at his ankles I brought him prone to the ground, and without much effort wrested his vast gun from him. As he lay blubbering and foul-mouthed, I opened the formidable weapon from which we had had so narrow an escape, and found it was, and always had been, quite empty.

The T. J. Ranch lies where the high walls of the canyon separate suddenly and surround a large plain, a vast circus in which armies might shock for the amusement of giants lolling on the lofty cliffs. As we rode back into it from our night of adventure, the western masses of rock were emerging from the shadows, and the first sweet breath of the morning was in the air.

"The breeze that on the Gila falls  
The sweet and placid Thames recalls,  
Where willows dip their ruffling leaves  
By golden fields of pilèd sheaves.

## A THREE-FOOT STOOL

I wish I were back in a boat,  
To let it on the current float,  
And slowly drifting to move under  
The grassy bank ; the pleasant thunder  
That rises from the falling weir  
I can in the far distance hear,  
The rattling rowlocks' even ring  
As swift, with oars spread on the wing  
An eight comes shooting round the bend,  
Sped on its course by many a friend.  
Now must the Oxford summer gladden  
Quadrangle broad and flowered garden,  
The cawing rooks mark the slow hours,  
The growing shades creep o'er the flowers.  
Oh might I on the turf at ease  
Lie by the friendly chestnut trees,  
Familiar trees, whose leaves among  
Human fruit has often hung,  
While above the high black tower  
The silv'ry moon has watched her hour  
Till our conversation loud  
Made her hide behind a cloud,  
To call to mind those pleasant years,  
Half in joy and half in tears !

When rains upon the pavement beat,  
And fogs that fill the murky street  
The air a gloomy dungeon make,  
A sudden journey I would take  
To where thy waters, Gila, run.  
Thy cloudless skies, thy splendid sun,  
Upon thy cliffs their brightness pour.  
Our heavens with sadness often lour.  
Celestial summer ever reigns  
Upon thy mountains and thy plains.  
Oh, might I bathe in its warm rays !  
Oh, might I tread thy lonely ways  
To see at eve the big camp-fire  
In roaring tongues of flame aspire,

To see the dawn rise from her bed,  
And on the hills her first light tread,  
The morning twilight's shadows fleet  
Vanish beneath her printless feet !  
When smoky London's tide of sound  
My weary ears is poured around,  
When bus and van and cab and car  
Rumble and roar with rattling jar,  
Louder than the ocean roar  
On a cavernous rocky shore,  
Thy silent woods I will recall  
Where I can hear my own footfall,  
Where not the breeze's faintest mutter  
Its breath among the leaves does utter."

## CHAPTER VII

THE spring round-up was proceeding at the Diamond Heart's Ranch, and I set out to join it. The position of the camp could only be conjectured, but the calculation was not difficult. A cowpuncher had come to the ranch to fetch flour and sugar and horseshoe nails a few days before, and had left word of their position at that moment. I knew the range well enough to guess the next camping spot in order, and determined to ride to it. I collected my mount, six horses, in the home pasture, and after seeing that all were properly shod, lashed the mass of blankets wrapped in a tarpaulin that formed my bed on the back of one of them, and set off, driving them before me.

The shadows of evening had grown deep in the woods before I found camp. The cowpunchers were sprawling round the fire, their supper finished ; in the umbered light of its flames, with their broad hats and unshaven faces, they looked a brigand crew. No one rose to meet me or even greeted me, but I knew the style of the people and ignored them with equal unconcern ; while I took some food out of the frying-pan and oven, which were still hot, they continued to talk among themselves in obedience to their boorish etiquette. As he sat

on his heels, in the difficult position men adopt all the world over who live where there are no chairs, the second cowpuncher, who was whittling away with his knife at a piece of stick, said—

“I was at Red River City when they started to make it; the Southern Pacific had just got there. It was only a little old town of wood and canvas, but they were as proud as hell, and claimed five thousand inhabitants at once.”

Having spoken thus much it was impossible for him not to refresh his mind by spitting. This he did, and continued—

“They were as proud as hell, and started a town-hall and an auditorium and an opera-house and a newspaper office, all made of wood and canvas. Well, a steer outfit, the Three Circles, with a big herd from the Rio Grande, blew into town. There were fifteen boys, and a lot of them wanted new pants, but the stores was right down to the bed rock on pants and had got none. So some of the boys ripped off the canvas from an empty building, and made themselves some. Next morning the paper came out that they regretted to say that Three Circle outfit had cut up the opera-house and made it into pants.”

The *remuda*, the little regiment of horses that is the working material of a round-up, grazed all day in the keeping of a herd, the “horse-wrangler”: at night the whole band are turned loose at some spot where the grass is good. The sociable animals will not begin to disperse before the light; and as leaders always exist in equine companies, bells are

tied to their necks, whose sound guides the wrangler when he sallies to get them at dawn. I was told where the remuda had been put for the night; so borrowing the horse-wrangler's mule, who stood tied to a tree, I started to drive my own beasts to the others.

Black clouds muffling the stars charged along above the tall trees, and dropped heavy thunder-drops. When I got back to camp the fire was dying out and the silence was perfect. On the ground lay the figures of the cowpunchers outlined by the tarpaulins of their beds, and sunk in a sleep as deep as death. I glanced at the wild and threatening sky and thought it prudent to prepare for a night of rain. I smoothed out the heap of blankets under which lay one half of my tarpaulin, and drew the other half of it over them, tucking in the sides carefully. As a further precaution I dug a little trench round the edges of my bed to carry off the rains like a gutter. I was thus safe and dry from anything but a deluge.

It seemed hardly a moment before I opened my eyes in the greyness of the dawn and the icy air almost painful in its intense cold. The camp was still asleep; only the cook moved in the still dark woods, dimly stooping over the fire as he prepared our breakfast, and the horse-wrangler on his mule was vanishing, shadowy among the trees, to fetch the horses. I fell back again into the depths of sleep only to be dragged out of them by the trampling of forty horses, and the horse-wrangler's shouts, "Horses! horses!" At his arrival the

camp stirred, and I emerged from warm blankets to pull on my boots in the biting air, and wash myself in the chill stream. Ropes had been stretched from trees to form a square, and into this frail court the horses were driven. The boys stood round to contain them, and each to count his mount and see that no horse of it had been left behind. The foreman roped out for each man the beast he wanted that morning. He assigned this duty to himself as the most certain and accurate, "the top" roper. In the ordinary throw you swing the loop round and round over your head before casting it. As all the horses would have seen the rope swinging near, and pressing to get away from it some would have broken out and run off, he used an overhand throw, much like that of an overhand bowler, and the loop dropped over the head of each one he selected in the shuffling group of horses, circulating with incessant motion.

A horse nearly always has to be caught by being roped, and this is one of the many uses to which a cowpuncher puts his rope. Always useful in this fashion on foot, it becomes a mechanical instrument of great power for dragging or upsetting on horseback, one end of it being tied to the steel pommel of a forty-pound saddle and a heavy horse, and the other end of it formed into a running noose. With it the cowman can control the half-wild animals he deals with; by flinging the noose on the feet or head of any quadruped he has it helpless. His instructed pony keeps dragging on the captive steer while he jumps off and forces it down or holds it on

the ground. Whenever he wants a fresh horse, on foot or mounted, he loosens his rope and lets it drop over its head. If a malignant mule refuses to be driven he lightly catches it by the fore-feet and flings it to the ground. Except a bull fierce enough to take the offensive, the cattle must obey him. A top roper will not miss the head of the smallest calf flying from him, or will get a big steer galloping off by the hind-feet and roll him on the ground. No sport offers such pictures of graceful dexterity as a superior cowpuncher roping. Down the side of the hill, amid rattling stones, an old long-horned steer comes charging; close at its tail comes the cow-pony, keenly following him. The horseman, balancing himself at the jumps and swaying to avoid jutting branches, has his arm stretched out with his loop hanging ready. At the first clear space he gives it a whirl round his head, and it flies over the horns of the now captive steer; the heavy fall he gets teaches him obedience to man.

Cowpunchers pique themselves on making every possible use of their ropes. With it they drag logs; they haul a foundered waggon out of the mud: it is a weapon, and they fling it over a small bear, or even a man, and stun him by dragging him over the rocks at full pace. Though it is easy to rope a little, it is only the practice of a lifetime that can make a real top roper. A Texan begins in babyhood, roping at fluttering chickens with pieces of string, and even he cannot equal the fabulous skill of the Mexican. The action may perhaps be best compared to the throwing of a cricket-ball: so also

any one can throw it, but unfailing accuracy is difficult. The mountain cowpunchers—for corresponding to the distinction of mountain and plain there are two races of cowpunchers, filled with mutual contempt for each other—are very fine ropers, and declare that their colleagues of the plain cannot rope, the plainsman retorting that the others cannot ride; for the mountaineer often has to use his rope on some lank, long-horned old steer, lord of some hidden ridge or canyon, taught by many years of success to escape from his pursuers and only to be tamed by a heavy fall, while the plainsman always works with a mount of twenty horses or so, fed on richer grass, always fresh and fat and therefore always bucking. However, roping may be called a decaying art, as it is strongly discouraged by owners, who suffer in the broken necks and legs of their cattle, and as it grows less needful with their increasing tameness.

After eating the hot food prepared for us, we rode off without a pause to make a drive. The sky was hardly yet filled with light. The whole band of cowpunchers rode silently after the foreman along a narrow trail that rose and ran along smooth and sloping shelves which fell with a sudden precipitous drop into Black Canyon. On the other side of the canyon we could see smooth rolling mesas dotted with trees like a pleasant park; on our own side the ground fell into deep side-canyons and high crests, round the abrupt ends of which we were riding. It was this country the foreman had determined to sweep of its cattle.

"Now the boss is going to deal out the pills," said the second cowpuncher as the foreman detached one man after another up the side-canyons, pointing to him, with some explanation, the direction he was to take. He fixed the point on which they were to converge, driving the cattle they found.

I was among the last to be sent off. The sun now climbing the sky had begun to throw long rays, but the spring flowers, scarlet and blue, still wore their morning freshness. For two hours I rode on, my eyes ranging over the mountain sides vigilantly, but not meeting any living thing anywhere. At length I saw, lying under the shelter of a fallen tree, several little calves huddled together in the sun. They were very small, of the same colour and glossy as newly opened horse-chestnuts. Their mothers had left them in this warm and cosy space like good nurses, while they themselves grazed out of sight on a patch of juicy grass. The little fellows looked up sleepily like puppies in a basket. They had never seen a man before and were not frightened; riding off, I soon found their mothers. I hesitated what to do, whether to leave the bunch or not. There were no steers with them, and only steers were being gathered in this spring round-up. On the other hand the calves were unbranded. At length I decided to go on without them. The calves were perhaps too young to bear the cruel branding-iron, especially after being driven a long way. I left them in their warm nest and rode off at that

slow, easy fox-trot which is the regular working pace of the cow-pony.

For a long time I saw nothing animate. The year had been wet. The springs and water-holes of the mountains being full, the cows would stay round them in the lofty brakes and towering bluffs. In dry years the thirsty beasts will loiter down in the bottom of the canyons round the thin trickles of water, and in a rainless year their carcasses, pined with drought, lie on the waterless river-beds.

At last, searching a little draw I found three head, two steers and a cow, grazing among low thickets and live oak. They gazed at me with surprise, and I rode round them and drove them along my original way; for a while they trotted on in front obediently. But at the head of the canyon, where it ran up into a long main ridge amid thickets of dwarf oak and pines, different and unaccountable ideas rose in their heads. The cow turned her clownish white face to me, gave an inane stare and turned down the hill at a lumbering canter. At this example the two steers started to run off in different directions. I was angry, and, charging down the hill after the cow, turned her up towards the ridge, but the two steers had disappeared and I only found them after a search. They bolted again through the thick pines on seeing me and gave me a brisk run. The trees were thick, their limbs were low, the ground uneven and strewn with fallen timber; my horse, familiar with this sport, went racing through all this with zest, jumping and turning

and stumbling. With the occasional help of the pommel I accomplished my purpose, which cost me nothing but a few bruises on the knees and scratches on the face. Circling round the two steers I drove them back to the cow, and again they trotted in front of me along the ridge.

Looking across the canyon, whose deep broad gulf lay on my right, I saw on the other side the second cowpuncher trying to drive a bunch of cattle along the steep slope of it ; they were scattering and he trying to collect them. The distance made him minute, but the clear air sharpened my sight and I could see him spurring his panting horses after them. The sun was now driving in full splendour across a cloudless sky. In the golden light the coarse blue canvas worn by him shone with silken lustre.

I raced my animals down into the canyon as fast as I could to go to his assistance. The cowpuncher saw me, and the thin air of this altitude easily carried his shout to my ears ; he also turned his beasts straight down the slope to meet mine at the broad bottom of the vale.

Our little herd went peacefully up it under the control of two horsemen, and several head were added to it. The cowpuncher could detect their tawny spots in the far hilltops long before me. I pored over the hillsides of rock and brush like a beginner over a difficult page. The cowpuncher read them at a glance. The same recalcitrant yearling that had run from me was not yet reduced to order. Several attempts of his to bolt were

checked, but at length he burst away up the hill-side. The cowpuncher pursued him, but the yearling had gained a fair start and went nearly to the ridge before he could be caught. As his horse laboured up the ascent he had angrily loosened the folds of his rope from the saddle-horn and got it ready, determined to discipline him. It hung from his outstretched arm, and as soon as he got within distance he whirled it over the calf and started to drag the prostrate and bellowing little creature down the hill. At the bottom of the slope he released him, and the yearling, restored to docility, trotted off to join the herd.

At last we reached our destination, and found the "hold up." Each man had come to the meeting-point with a few head who had all been thrown together, and were being held up in one herd. We found the dappled cattle standing and lying about, and the cowpunchers round them, most of them dismounted. The high point we had now reached gave us a view of an infinite rolling sea of woods on one side. On the other side lay the steep and sunny canyons we had just ascended. In the distance rose circle after circle, tier after tier of mountains —a mighty amphitheatre. On the farthest verge the giant Mogollyon mountains, vast, dark, and unexplored, kept guard. A sky of the sweetest Italian blue smiled upon our heads.

We two had been the last to arrive, and the foreman set the herd moving down along the wandering canyon that led back to camp. One side of this canyon had been swept in the first drive. To clear

the other side of its cattle most of the men were detailed over various lines of country, all leading to the main artery down which the cattle were going, with whom I and the second cowpuncher were left. Whatever cattle they found was to be driven to this herd.

I set about the monotonous work, pushing and shouting at the tardy beasts, charging the laggards. The long procession included all kinds, from small skipping calves, sailing close under the hulls of their big mothers, to antique and jovial bulls, whose steps were measured and majestic. This made them easy to drive; there were no separations of mothers and offsprings, and frantic efforts on the part of each to join the other. The cowpuncher whom I had helped earlier was still young and genial. A scrubby beard clothed his round, yokel face, matching the stained and unkempt black clothes he wore. As we rode together he enlivened the tedious work by telling me huge and very simple lies, almost falling from his saddle in paroxysms of laughter at his own humour. Being able to take this work at our ease, he crooked his leg round the horn of his saddle, and in a tuneless and discordant voice sung songs of the most pointless impropriety. But some of them were redolent of Texan life, and celebrated the famous drives on the Long Trail in which his father had spent his life:—

“ My lover is a cowboy,  
He’s kind and brave and true ;  
He rides a Spanish pony,  
And throws the lasso too.

And when he comes to see me,  
For his coming I do long,  
I put my hand in his hand,  
He sings to me this song :

' I am a Texan puncher,  
Merry and gay and free,  
To work upon the prairie  
Is always joy to me.  
My trusty little ponies  
Are my companions true ;  
O'er plain and rock and rivers,  
They sure will pull me through.

' When early dawn is breaking  
On the plains far away,  
I get into my saddle  
And round-up all the day.  
We rope, we mark, we brand 'em ;  
I tell you what, we're smart—  
We get the herd all ready ;  
For Kansas, then we start.

' I am a jolly puncher,  
From Texas State I hail ;  
With bridle, gun, and saddle,  
I'm ready for the trail.  
I like the rolling prairie,  
So free from care and strife,  
Behind a herd of long-horns,  
I'd journey all my life.

' When heavy clouds do gather,  
And the wild lightnings flash,  
And crashing thunders rattle,  
And heavy rain-drops splash,  
What keeps the herd from running  
Stampeding far and wide ?  
'Tis the cowboy lover's whistle,  
And singing by their side.

' When we reach Kansas city  
    The boss our wages pays.  
We rope 'em on the sidewalk,  
    All kinds of hell we raise ;  
And then from northern cities,  
    Upon the cars we come,  
That rock us back to Texas,  
    The puncher's native home.'"

At intervals cowpunchers would appear out of the thickets of live oak that covered the steep sides of the canyon and send down an affluent stream to flow into the principal body descending the canyon. They were welcomed with a sympathetic bellowing, and lost themselves in the mass of flicking tails and tossing horns and dappled backs.

The steer, the length of whose horns proclaimed his untamable Mexican origin, and who had already been "busted" by the cowpuncher that morning, was still refractory; he now seized his opportunity and dashed past us and up the canyon. My companion, volleying a torrent of oaths, dashed over the rocks after him. He thought it proper to bust him again more severely, and in so doing he performed the most difficult of roping feats, "fore-footing a running cow." He galloped along the side of the flying steer, keeping him on his right, and threw his rope so that the long loop flew over the steer's withers, curled, and caught his fore-feet. At the same moment he turned his horse round in the opposite direction. The steer's fore-legs were thus jerked from under him as he was going at full pace, and almost turning a complete somersault, he fell with fearful violence.

The hot sun was full on its downward course when we reached camp. There was a big double corral, a double arena of high posts and bars, into which the cattle flowed and were shut. The horse-wrangler had the horses ready. Food was eaten in the silence of haste and hunger; getting any food at all during the day was a privilege which we owed to the organising power of the foreman.

The "round-up" was a steer round-up, that is to say its main object was to collect sufficient steers to fulfil the terms of a contract to deliver a given number by a certain date; incidentally, all unbranded calves following Diamond Heart mothers were branded. This collection of cattle is the routine of a "round-up," for whatever purposes it may be going on. The next thing was to "cut" the steers, to sort them out of the proceeds of the drive. At the end of our hurried meal the foreman got into his saddle immediately, and we followed him and dismounted at the corrals, now a sea of tawny backs and tossing horns. The branding-irons, whose pastoral hook belied their purposes, were drawn from the leather cases and thrust into a small fire lit in the corner of the corral. The boss, who alone remained mounted, rode slowly into the welter of cattle and tossed his line over an unbranded calf, which he dragged to the fire struggling like a fish at the end of a line. A man ran down the taut rope and, leaning over, grasped the calf with one hand at the neck and with the other at the flank. As the calf bucked, he

neatly jerked his legs from under him—"flanked him," in technical language—and dropped with a knee on him. The others held the little creature by different holds while his ears were marked with the knife and the brand of the Diamond and Heart burnt into his side. Released, the poor little thing went bawling after its mother.

The smallest, a few months old, as sleek and soft to handle as puppies, are often spared till they grow older. But a big calf makes a fight, and it is hot work bringing him down on his side. I spent hours in the sweat of these struggles, in hot whirling clouds of dust raised by the frantic cattle and the smell of burnt hair and flesh.

At the conclusion of the branding, the foreman briefly said they would cut the steers. Four of the men rode their horses into the corrals, and one of these stationed himself at the gate which divided them. The others waited. The foreman rode into the press of beasts, and the sea of horns and backs parted before him and surged in all directions. From the mass he loosened a group, from the group a single steer, then charged this steer towards the gate. The steer dodged and doubled, but the horse followed him as closely as a collie dog does sheep; the other horsemen surrounded the beast, and, whacking their resonant leather leggings with their quirts, chased him through the gate. So gradually the entire quantity of steers was sifted from one corral to the other.

Cutting the herd is the prettiest part of cow-work, and is not stained with its ordinary brutality.

It is a display of animal intelligence almost equal to a dog's, such as horses rarely give, and it has a grace and excitement of its own. In the mountains where the herds are small, it is not difficult. But in the plains the herds are vast and counted by thousands: yet among these thousands, and in a whirlwind of penetrating dust, the cowman must be able to distinguish the brand and age and sex of the animals he wants, and cutting is thus one of the highest tests of his qualities. It is at the same time the highest test of his horsemanship, for a bucking horse is said to be easier to sit than a fine cutting horse, which turns so quickly.

The sun had now fallen below the mountains, and the first dark veils of night began to shadow sky and earth. It remained for us to store our bag for that day, the score of steers we had captured, by taking them to one of the large barbed-wire pastures, there to wait till the round-up was over. The mass of the cattle were turned loose and scattered, bawling and cropping at the grass, into the pine-woods and cedar thickets. After their disappearance, the steers were marched out of the inner corral, surrounded by a close guard of cowpunchers, on their way to the pasture. But they missed the congenial company of their mothers and relations, and the novelty of each other's society did not attract them. At every instant one darted out and tried to get away, but his guards invariably chased him back. Our horses were still fresh, and the way led over smooth and rolling mesas, like English downs. It was an

interval of frolic and pleasant excitement, such as sometimes relieves the dulness and anxiety of cattle-work.

By the time we sighted the gate of the pasture, the evening star in the van of the heavenly armies was above the hill in his effulgent panoply. At the bottom of the last canyon we reached the trees were thick, and we found ourselves in the double darkness of woods and night; I rode in a cavern of leafy gloom, the branches brushed my cheek, and I could hear the beasts splashing in the stream as they drank greedily: the pungent perfume of an unknown weed filled the air, a scent like that which blows from citron and orange groves, in the spring, by Mediterranean seas. At last we saw the tired beasts safe within the barbed-wire fence. When we emerged from the canyon again on to the heights, the glittering hosts of the stars occupied all the fields of heaven and a full moon poured its splendour on the billows of foliage below. The air was cool and windless, and the refreshment it brought was delicious after the toil of the day. All fatigue left me at the beauty and pleasure of the scene, and it had an effect even on the spirits of my callous companions. Long after they were asleep, I remained alone by the camp-fire gazing at that array of bright lamps, which at that elevation seemed to throb with an ineffable lustre.

## CHAPTER VIII

BELPHŒBE and I rode along the shady valley of the Gila, crossing and re-crossing it, and driving before us four donkeys. They were to be used by me on an expedition I intended to make with Hay, the bear-trapper, who had been taken for that summer into the employment of some neighbouring ranchman, where grizzlies had been committing depredations. I intended to put the donkeys in a certain pasture, a vast piece of land enclosed by barbed wire, where it would be very convenient for me to leave them till I wanted them. Reinhold had at first promised to accompany us. But the day before the foreman and a cowpuncher, riding down a canyon, had seen a cougar eating on a dead cow; he is a common enough beast, a kind of small panther, yellow, and not very much bigger than a wild cat. They galloped after it, and the cowardly creature, bloated with meat, had run some distance and crouched under a tree. With a fine shot from his horse, at about thirty paces, the foreman had killed it, and subsequently presented the skin to Belphœbe. He had told us we should probably find another. It was a likely place for them, high, rocky ledges over the Gila, and Reinhold, who was a resolute hunter, had

gone that way on the chance of finding one. We were to meet him at an agreed place. In front of us trotted the three black donkeys, all of them large and powerful, the spread of their large ears revealing the high-bred strain of their blood. The little white donkey, Jack, had also been extracted from the brush which he made his hermitage and made to join them. In such company he felt himself humiliated, being accustomed to work only with horses on a cow outfit, and rather snobbishly disdaining his own race. His haughty heart boiled in his small breast. To follow these black, menial creatures was an indignity to one who had trotted in the lead, with five hundred hoofs thundering behind him, so he kept his black brethren at a due distance. Jack had even learned to imitate the ways of a horse: when lifting his head to stare at a stranger, he tried to give his short neck a proud arch, and he would flick his stumpy tail like the wild mares, whose long tails are like willows swept by the west wind. The first black donkey jogged in front of us, loaded with the heap of blankets that make up a bed in that country. He disappeared under the pile. I had loosened the rope which hung rolled up to the steel pommel of my saddle, and occasionally enlivened his pace by flicking him with the loose end. Belpheobe interposed on his behalf, and I had to reassure her that the most furious lashings would hardly tickle that tough hide. The company of those quaint and endearing little animals gave her great enjoyment, and she devoted her attention to them.

The second black donkey was under suspicion of being a runaway, so he was necked by a thick short rope to the neck of the third black donkey, whose fidelity was unimpeachable. Like drunken companions, they were inseparable but constantly deviating : number two sometimes bit playfully at the neck of number three, who pursued her way mildly and gravely.

"Did Reinhold start before dawn to see about his cougar ?" Belphœbe asked me.

"We both saw the Dawn," I explained, "but we are familiar with her."

"I like her in the mountains," said Belphœbe, "she is rosy and fresh, driving a golden chariot. Down in the plains she is quite Oriental, in a robe of saffron, with jewels of amethyst, and her chariot is burning red."

"I am tired of the Dawn anywhere," I answered, "I see too much of her; she is intrusive and importunate ; her face is only blowsy to me, and I wish apoplexy would carry her off one night."

We fell into silence, again enjoying the pure air and pure sky. The first fresh sounds of spring were in the air. Belphœbe turned fond eyes towards me, and their blue seemed to reflect the light of those skies. I took her hand as we rode and said—

"Belphœbe, let me hear that song about the spring you sung the last time we were here."

She excused herself.

"But, you know, I don't think I could sing on a horse."

I insisted—

“Yes, you can: won’t you try?”

“Very well,” she said. “I will if you want me to.”

She sang an ancient song of rather stilted words, but with a melody in it that fell lightly.

“Now down the vales with ringing notes and bold  
Spring’s heralds lifting sound their trumps of gold.

The lawns with flowers embroidered

Are a soft, painted carpet spread;

The stately woods raised tall and high,

Pavilions under which to lie;

Spring herself with laughter glances

As down the vale she trips and dances.

Above tall, silken fleets of cloud do stand,

To bear her smoothly to th’ enchanted land.”

The echo prolonged each rich note of her voice, and the radiant skies lent a charm to this music. I looked at her and said—

“That valley was in Surrey, and never near this canyon.”

The wandering course of the Gila now ran across our path again. It was as clear as molten crystal, of admirable transparency. I thought of it in its fierce winter mood, not a small stream through which our horses now splashed, but a broad river, swollen and black with rage, charging down the canyon, carrying under its clamorous waters a dangerous and invisible drift of logs and roots. I remembered one occasion in the winter when I had found it like this on the very same spot. It had hardly wetted my horse’s fetlocks, as he splashed across it, on my journey away from the

ranch ; but on my return, three days later, I had to go through this flood to reach home again. Ignorant and inexperienced, I rashly put my horse into the water where I thought there would be shallows, and he reluctantly dropped down into it from the bank. Instantly I felt myself immersed in icy water. The stream, which was at that point as deep as it was violent, had knocked my horse's legs from under him, and we were rolling in the waters. When I got my head out I found my left foot was still in the stirrup, and my horse was swimming and plunging along, dragging me. I tried to get hold of the broad stirrup-leather and to haul myself to where I could grasp the pommel, but this acrobatic feat was too difficult, so I gave it up and worked my foot free from the stirrup altogether. I found myself standing on a bank of sand, the waters pouring round me, and watched my horse swimming down, turned round and round helplessly, till he struck a shelving bank, where he walked out and shook his dripping hide. I stood till I saw him out and then descended into the furious river to wade through, for it was not deep at that spot. The impetuous current immediately knocked me over and I was carried off and spun like a straw. It was impossible to swim with heavy boots and spurs, and a heavy cartridge-belt and six-shooter, but I contrived to breast the waters and keep my head above them. Soon I was swept by the root of a tree growing from the bank, and catching it, I hauled myself out.

I reminded Belphœbe of the incident, and she turned and looked at the place.

The next crossing, for the Gila, like all canyon rivers, wanders in its course from side to side and compels you to traverse and re-traverse its stream—the next crossing was a little deeper. The shallow waters chafed at some boulders in their way, and the loaded donkey picked his way uneasily through them. The bed passed over and ascended the other bank. It seemed to move automatically up it. Only two long, black, astute ears projecting at the bed's brow, revealed the principle of motion living inside it.

"Do you think he can stand up by himself?" Belphœbe asked anxiously at the sight of his caution.

I told her the powerful little animal needed no help, and showed her his sagacious companions using equal care, as we followed them. I still held her hand. I kissed the white fingers and said—

"Dearest, before you knew I did exist, my soul flew to your service, and when we met, I was your servant. But I from you received nothing but harshness, and after months of pain you barely grew polite. For all these hurts you owe me much. With double usury I mean to get my debt, but kisses sweet shall be the coin."

She pressed my fingers and made rejoinder.

"I felt the same and prayed to be your mate; if not, your servant, to help you in this world. But I was told nem must be made to woo and value not

what comes to them unsought. But I was won from the first moment: the rest was all pretence. A bitter pleasure lies in hurting those into whose arms we fain would fall. Their humbleness is proof of power, and we love to play the tyrant."

I released her hand, to drive the donkeys up a steep trail that took us by a long ridge out of the valley of the Gila. At the top we paused to breathe our horses and look round. Under the radiant light innumerable battalions of pines poured over the valley and up to the summits of the heights. Close to the stream, in the damp soil, the high cotton-wood trees clustered bosoming, with their new spring dress of fresh green.

I took her hand again and asked—

"Do you remember the hour, the evening hour, when as I held your hand to say good-bye you leant against my breast, and we embraced for the first time; why did you then relent?"

She answered—

"You were too kind, too patient: I would not delay to tease you any longer."

But we were now distracted from this subject by the antics of the donkeys, for we were now going down hill, which always makes a donkey frolicsome. It is then he loves to charge bounding and braying into a troop of his friends. The whole cavalcade rolled down the hill at the same fantastic gait. At the bottom they stopped and surveyed each other soberly.

"Thou shalt play with thy neighbour" is the fundamental commandment in the Asinine Deca-

logue, and donkeys, justest of all animals, are more playful than dogs. Their games are various. The national sport is to run along together and bite at your neighbour's neck ; then to stand side by side, without a movement. When going down hill you must always run, duck your head between your legs, bound in the air and lash with both heels at imaginary enemies. This recreation is improved if you can loosen your load, as you go off the hill, and watch it tumble off piece by piece, and a further refinement is to have a frantic man clattering after you and trying to stop you. If alone, a favourite pastime is to scratch your forehead with your hind foot ; but the rule is, that your hind foot must pass between your ears. Another difficult achievement is to twist your head far enough round to graze off the grass behind your tail ; but it does not count if your legs move.

This superior species reverses the rule of mankind. As a colt, a donkey is grave and reverend ; but old age makes him frolicsome, and little Jack, who had reached the extreme limit of life and worked in the range in the time of the Apaches, was the clown of the party. Mildest of quadrupeds, his fancy lay in pretending to be wicked and fierce. Coming down hill was his special opportunity : he abased his lofty ears and galloped down, kicking at imaginary aggressors, and bucking. The others maintained a decorum befitting their youth, but they could not entirely resist the influence of Jack, and sketched a slight imitation of his wild antics. Jack stood already awaiting

them at the bottom of the hill, satisfied that he had confirmed and established the impression of his dangerous ferocity.

At the bottom of the slope we found ourselves amid endless ranks of pines; our horses' tread was muffled in the deep bed of needles, and we ceased to speak. The inhabitants of the mountains ride silently and only new-comers can talk in them. The mountain heights are still, without the sound of a bird or a breath of wind, as still as midnight under a noonday sun, and their silence falls on human beings. At moments we discerned, in a glimpse through the trees, the twinkling of flying deer. At last we reached a corral close to which a small shrunken rivulet trickled through the rocks. This was the place where we had agreed to meet Reinhold and share our luncheon. I loosened the girths of the horses, and slipped back their bridles to let them graze, and also unloaded the bed of the first donkey to relieve him. The little beasts remained in a group, resting themselves, looking more like toys than useful animals: funny toys too, for they are all incongruity in appearance. Their heads are out of all proportion to their bodies, and their ears to their heads; and their look of resignation and benevolence at one end so completely contrasts with the flicking tails and lively heels on the other.

I untied one pack of sandwiches and placed them on the root of a tree, and then, moving a little farther off, I knelt to untie the string of another packet, thus assuming an attitude of involuntary

gallantry, of one knee on the ground. Belphœbe sat down suddenly on the other, and parting my hair which had fallen in disorder over my eyes while I unloaded the first donkey's pack, kissed me on the forehead. The sapphire of her eyes still gleamed with exhilaration of our ride. She had a long, recalcitrant wisp of hair which escaped with other blown and ringlety curls to play on her azure-veined temple ; in vain it was restored to its place in the heavy masses ; irreclaimable, it broke away to flutter in her eyes. In return for her caress I took this familiar, silken curl and pulled it sharply. She laughed, and punished my impertinence by giving me a push which over-balanced me backwards on to the ground.

I rose and turned to get the packet of sandwiches I had placed on the root of the tree. They had vanished, paper and all. A few yards off Jack stood sleepily ; only a slow, almost imperceptible movement of his mouth showed the road they had taken, and we found ourselves with our lunch diminished by half.

We now heard Reinhold approaching, and the hoofs of his horse rattling on the rocky bed of the stream. He reached us in a state of exultation, as he could now add a cougar to the other beasts he had slain. The yellow skin he had left hanging up on a tree, for his horse would not tolerate having it tied to the saddle. There had been something inglorious in its death. When Reinhold reached the place where the carcase lay and had it in view, he could see nothing. He stood looking in vain ;

at last he fired at a yellow spot over a rock at the top of the hill, thinking it might be a cougar's head. At that moment he looked round at the dead cow and saw the yellow head of the cougar looking over it. He missed his shot at it, but the beast sneaked off and hid behind the trunk of a tree, and as its hind quarters projected, it was ignominiously shot in them.

While we were eating our sandwiches, he told us about this, and towards the end of his account he pulled out his watch. Its large size and weight contrasted with the slim and elegant piece of jewellery he usually wore, made by Bréguet, the great French watchmaker, at the beginning of the nineteenth century. No craftsman has since been able to compress the delicate lacework of its mechanism into so small a space. It was hardly thicker than a silver dollar. I inquired where it was, and spoke of it in terms of praise. Reinhold said—

“Did I ever tell you how I acquired it, and my adventure with it?”

“No,” I answered, “I did not know there was any story of yours I had not heard. I hope it is as untrue as the others. Let us hear it.”

Reinhold received my invitation with good nature and began—

“When I was at Paris, reading for my degree in Political Science, I became the friend of a fellow called Dupont; that Bréguet watch belonged to him. I had often admired it, as I have a taste for objects of vertu. I had even gone so far as to offer to buy it at a price which might well seem fabulous. But

young Dupont's eye would twinkle behind the glasses of his pince-nez, and he would shake his head.

"Money was not a strong enough motive to him. You may have heard of his very wealthy father, the famous antisemitic newspaper proprietor and politician, Dupont. He was the founder of his great paper, the *Aryan*, which had attained an enormous circulation among the reactionary classes, and was considered to be the organ of the aristocracy. They almost believed in the verbal inspiration of its articles. He had been the first to bring the revival of the Inquisition into the sphere of practical politics, for his antisemitic ardour was furious. I had often admired his ringing tones and his forcible eloquence at the fashionable meetings organised by the Society for the Promotion of Autodafés.

"I knew the Dupont family from having been given a letter of introduction to the old gentleman by my father, who had once befriended him at Berlin, where he was still called by his inherited name of Liebfraumilch, which he changed in France to that of Dupont. The odium which weighed upon him as a Jew had compelled him to leave Germany and carry his fortunes to Paris. On the other hand, there his birth had greatly helped him, and had secured him the assistance of the great Jewish bankers; he had not been ungrateful, and had drawn into their commercial enterprises the classes over whom he possessed such unrivalled influence.

"But though he had discarded the hereditary

name, it was not in his power to put aside his hereditary nose. It was a magnificent organ, fit to bear the weight of mightiest monarchies, containing the most complicated and delicate machinery. He used it largely instead of his eyes, which had grown purblind with excessive work in the glare of an editor's room. It sensitively transmitted to him the trend of public opinion, and warned him very early on which side lay the majorities and the victors. By putting it in contiguity with men, he could pierce to the inmost recesses of their character; women fell tranced and quivering in his arms from its mere contact. The nostrils were wide pumps through which he sucked in the pleasures and satisfactions of this world. Its high dorsal ridge, seen above the fray, cheered the heart of his friends, and its advance carried terror among his enemies. Before a single blast of it, ancient institutions fell in ruins, and established reputations were exploded. It was at once the instrument and symbol of his power.

"It was presumably, too, the seat of his mighty brain. For young Dupont, in whom the paternal organ had much degenerated, had a mind of inferior capacity. The father and the son maintained excellent relations; but their manners were not ordinary, and they said unexpected things. One evening at dinner, as gouty old Dupont was drinking water instead of wine, I asked him the reason of his abstemiousness. He answered knowingly—

"'You see, young Reinhold, I do not wish to pay for a moment's pleasure by hours of discomfort.'

"Young Dupont thought he should say something as epigrammatic as his father, and capped him.

"If you had always acted on that principle, Father—" but he stopped, unable to find anything clever to say.

"You would not have been here, my boy," said the old man, with a look of satisfaction at his own neatness of speech.

"But if tact remained a mysterious quality to them, they had strict notions of the duty of hospitality, and young Dupont exerted himself to entertain me; he had a certain vivacity of mind and his company was not disagreeable. One night in particular, after a formal invitation, he offered me a most sumptuous dinner. We were alone together, and I was sated and crammed almost as soon as the long procession of dishes and choice wines had begun to run their course. But I endured the discomfort and concealed my feelings, for we were at a restaurant of culinary fame, which it had been challenged that night by the very gastronomic young Dupont to maintain: on such an occasion I realised my personal feelings were of little importance, and willingly sacrificed them, though towards the end of the feast my utmost powers were taxed. For my further enjoyment this princely young man had reserved the large stage-box at a theatre, which we occupied in solitary state. The play would have been better if we had had worse seats. At such close quarters no illusions were possible. We could see the paint daubed on the actors' faces and overhear their

private conversations. This evening of extravagant pleasures was only marred by one incident, the violent quarrel which arose between young Dupont and the cabman transporting us to the theatre over his fare. Dupont revelled in this jarring conflict and proved himself a redoubtable controversialist. He stood in all his vast circumference blinking behind his glasses, while the sharpest sarcasms of the cabman glanced off his almost impenetrable hide, and he would have prolonged the vociferous wrangle on the pavement if I had not had the pusillanimity to buy off the man with a few coppers. This bribe hardly pacified him, burning with indignation as he was at having been offered his strict legal fare. On going out of the theatre I wished Dupont good night, thanking him for his generous hospitality. But he insisted on my becoming his guest at supper ; and though this seemed excessive and I was eager to get home, it was impossible for me to refuse. We made our way to another restaurant of ringing reputation, which had spread so far that all Frenchmen had been driven from it by the rich foreigners who filled it nightly.

"There, too, the cream of luxury is skimmed and offered to your delectation. Passing from the windy street, we entered long rooms filled with warmth and brightness ; rich white napery and silver shed their lustre under the light of a thousand lamps. The aroma of cigars, which is the smell of luxury, and the rustle of silk dresses, which is its sound, hung about us. Round the walls were large painted panels. One showed a

blue sky across which fair women, the gauze slipping from their white shoulders, danced wildly hand in hand. In another courtiers, bewigged and magnificent, handed silken shepherdesses into a gilded barge which lay moored on the misty lake of an ancient park. Another represented the dewy lawns of a dark garden lit by the flame of Chinese lanterns : on the lawn a group of musicians in evening dress played their violins rapturously, and in the darkness of the wood nymphs danced, nude and rosy. Beneath these paintings sat men and women round small tables. I noticed one man whose head was covered with thick bristles, and from whose mouth rose two large tusks : he grunted as he fed. Another half asleep wreathed his long proboscis across the table ; the loose, grey skin round his small eyes was all wrinkled, and two wide flapping ears fell round him. One of the men stared at me with vacant face, and went on munching, the little beard that fell from his chin wagging up and down. Many of them had projecting carnivorous jaws, especially the women. Their dresses were gorgeous, and one in particular, a flow of white silk and lace, drew my attention from its beauty. But the head of its wearer was flat, and she darted her tongue as she chattered volubly with her neighbour, who bore a tawny, flowing mane on the top of her beautiful neck. The eyebrows of this one were fair and shaggy, and the shifting green of her eyes was terrible ; she cracked the bones of her food between her teeth. A black little creature rolled the lewd

dark eyes of a monkey at us. I felt there that under the tables were ursine paws and cloven hoofs and coiled folds and flicking tails. Among them nimble waiters darted, carrying sparkling wines, or their change, gold heaped on silver platters.

"We could not find room at first : but Dupont saw in a far corner a table occupied by a girl alone. Her hair was golden, and the light lingered in her rolled tresses, as it does in the summer foliage of trees. There was an expression of melancholy delicacy in her face which embarrassed us, but receiving her permission with a smile, we sat down. Dupont, taking the part of host, ordered some delicacies for supper. The conversation dragged, even when champagne was in our glasses, and Dupont, with the intention of pleasing, said to the fair creature, fixing his pince-nez with both hands—

"'How much money do you make ? pretty good business, eh ?'

"She lifted her heliotrope eyes in astonishment at him, but he was unconscious of any guilt, and asked a few more searching questions. Feeling innocent of offence, he appeared to be outraged with the girl when she directed her talk more to me, the guest, than to him, the host. But he satisfied his resentment when the bill was brought by declaring he had got no money with him, and thus compelling me to pay for it.

"Consequently his social conscience, though rather sluggish, must have grown uneasy, for he appeared

at my hotel a few mornings afterwards, and in a most conciliatory way offered to let me have the Bréguet watch which I had often admired. This offer was evidently intended as a reparation, and he alluded to his behaviour in a tone of excuse. I accepted his offer, and sat down and wrote a cheque then and there. I was handling the exquisite jewel which had just become my own, when Dupont tapped me on the shoulder and said genially—

“‘You have got a pretty good bargain, my boy. I have only charged you twenty-five per cent. more than I gave for it myself.’

“He buttoned his coat up over the cheque, and departed, well pleased at his ingenious diplomacy.

“My new possession gave me at first more care than satisfaction. The newspapers of Paris are crowded with accounts of burglaries and assaults and murders. On my first arrival I thought all its citizens were brigands, which was unfair to those industrious men: on the other hand, I had not learned to do justice to the style or imagination which grace its journalists. In my youthful alarm I was always on my guard and looked with suspicion on any one I met after dark, and felt every half-hour at my waistcoat pocket. After a time I grew accustomed to the carrying of this valuable, and it became less a source of discomfort to me.

“One night in July I had been to an interesting performance at a building on the Boulevards, which had once been a theatre, though on its stage no more plays were now produced: they had been suc-

ceeded by a strange mixture of buffoonery, dancing, and trivial songs. It was an admirable arrangement, and far superior to the old representations. The performers were freed from the arduous and almost impossible task of imitating life, and no duty was imposed on them but that of strutting, in the case of the men, and mincing, in the case of the women. The change was even more beneficial to the spectator, on whom no exertion of the mind, or even attention, was any longer imposed. For a brief space they were released from all earthly cares and tasted perfect happiness. Among the actors and actresses who appeared and re-appeared on the stage without reason, one alone, the leading actress, could charm. She could not be less than fifty years old, but by a perfection of her art, she simulated the graceful awkwardness and unaffected candour of youth. Her eyes even wore its brilliance and her cheeks an adolescent bloom. When on the boards she fixed all eyes which dwelt carelessly on the others at her departure. In one scene in particular she had touched me, when with dark eyes of supplication she knelt imploring the perfectly ridiculous hero. About half-way through the piece I made my way through the happy throng in the stalls. Never had night and its sombre plumage seemed to me more beautiful than after this musical comedy, and I followed star after star in the dark firmament. It was still warm from the day, and opening my coat, I determined to walk and see the illuminations, for it was the night of the National Festival.

"I made a circuit that took me to the embankment of the Seine, where I could see the dark velvet of its stream shoot under the far-flung arches of the bridge. Up the river the island of the Cité and the towers of Notre Dame stood moored like a ship in mid-stream, blazing to its topmost mast. Passy on its heights, in the opposite direction, was suspended like a shining city in mid-air. Along the asphalt of the Champs Élysées the festoons of lamps, clustered and hung like loads of glittering fruit, poured their light on its broad spaces. After taking my fill of all these wonders, I crossed the Place de la Concorde under the terrific glare of the arc lights, and passed in among the lawns and shrubs of the Champs Élysées. Their cool gloom was all the more welcome after the artificial daylight which reigned outside.

"Though I stared at the dark masses of shrubs in my solitary walk, I did not see them: their place was taken in my mind by the dark eyes of the actress, raised in their adorable look of appeal. I was sunk in this vision when a man, undistinguishable in the obscurity, started from behind a tree and darted at my waistcoat. I felt for my watch: it was gone, and the man was flying from me. I started after him, and as he was not swift of foot was soon up upon him. But he doubled and turned several times, using his knowledge of the place. A last he crossed an avenue and disappeared up a dark and narrow street, where I followed him, and was on the point of seizing him, when he stumbled, and stumbling, turned to face

me. Almost involuntarily, for I could see nothing, I dealt him a blow in the face with my fist which was stunning, for it had all the weight of my body and the impetus of my run in it. He staggered against the wall, cowering, and I shouted to him in very bad French—

“‘Give me up my watch ! give it up, you scoundrel !’

“He poured out a torrent of words, which I was not familiar enough with the language to understand, only the word watch seemed to re-occur. I shook him by the arm as he crouched, and shouted in my jargon—

“‘My watch ! give it up !’

“He went on talking, and I clamouring, till at last, exasperated, I lifted my fist again in a threatening way. At this the wretch, stricken with fear, put his hand in his waistcoat pocket and thrust a watch into mine. Without seeing it, I grasped it and let him go. He vanished at once into the dark again, and I dropped what I had recovered into the large pocket of my greatcoat.

“I returned to my hotel, which was not far off, pluming myself on my achievement. My complacency was overflowing, and I looked in the hall for some one to whom I could relate my exploit, but as there was no acquaintance of mine to be seen, I went upstairs to my bedroom. On entering it, I turned on the electric light. My eye was at once caught by the round gold disc of my precious Bréguet watch on the dressing-table, where it had lain since I had left it there, as I dressed for dinner.”

I always thought Reinhold's stories took up a good deal of time, and as soon as he had stopped, said—

"Thanks very much; but we had better get a move on us, or we shan't be home before dark."

The little band of donkeys, after grazing a little, had, as usual, come to a standstill in a group. With their disproportionately large heads and small bodies, they looked like forest dwarfs in a fairy tale, humble, grotesque, and faithful. I went and hauled the first donkey to the bed with the intention of packing it on him; while Reinhold and I straightened it out to lift it on him, he stood by with a dreamy eye, wishing he had been born in a different place and his lot cast in a different sphere, far from saddles and packs, to live among the wild donkeys who fleet the time carelessly in the lonely brush and among the cliffs, where the tender young shoots of grass are thick, and grazing and playing the only business. We placed the mass of blankets and tarpaulin on his back, and throwing the proper hitch with the rope, laced it round him as if it had been a corset. To draw him in tight, for donkeys astutely inflate themselves as soon as they feel the girth, we each put a foot against him on each side and pulled with all our strength. During these operations he remained abstracted, distended, and indifferent.

As soon as our cavalcade was in motion Belphœbe thought it right to thank Reinhold for his story, which I had not given her time to do. She said—

"I think that is a very amusing story. But did you then have two watches?"

"I did," answered Reinhold.

"That poor man!" was her exclamation. "Ought you not to have tried and found him and given it back to him?"

Then, after a moment's reflection, she added—

"These stories are very amusing you tell us; I wish I could remember them all. Why don't you write all about this life out here in the West?"

On this, as on all other subjects, Reinhold had a theory, complete and ready, clear-cut and squared. He said—

"An adventurous life unfits a man to write a book of adventure. An expert in adventure writes technically. He has learnt that the weather and the food, the peculiarities of the country, and the qualities of the weapons, all dull, prosaic things, are the most important; narrow escapes, breathless moments, sudden perils, are of trivial interest. But the public does not care for technical works. It wants sensation not instruction. So it is that the journals of explorers are dull, and deserve the neglect they suffer from. The best books of adventure are written by authors like Stevenson, who caught cold every time his feet got wet. He only knew Death and his grim visage from what he had seen of him at funerals. So, I take an example to illustrate my theory, he can hold his reader in an agony of suspense when he describes a murder. He paints the expression of the murderer, the

whizz of the knife, the cry of the victim, the terror of the spectator. If he had known anything of what he was writing about he would have noted the exact number of yards the knife was thrown, its weight and shape, the position of the wound especially, and the flow of blood, the extinction of life and the disposal of the corpse. It would have been more like an inquest than a novel."

"But I like reading Stevenson very much," was Belphoebe's comment.

"So Stevenson," Reinhold continued, "is infinitely less exciting than Jules Verne. Unfortunately for his literary fame, Stevenson had travelled and seen some of the world. Jules Verne had the inestimable advantage of having never set his foot outside his native town of Amiens. He was even careful to avoid ever seeing Paris, lest it should wither the fine flower of his imagination. Thus he enthralled his whole generation with accounts of Africa and Australia, of all climates and all time, the earth and the waters under the earth. Stevenson himself flags when he tells stories of the South Seas: a heavy weight of first-hand knowledge handicaps him. But how thrilling he is when he writes of the eighteenth century, of which he knew but little, and still more thrilling about the fifteenth, of which he knows nothing at all. I think his Highland stories would have been much improved had he not been a Scotsman.

"The poets support my view still more strongly. Readers of Homer skip the fights, and the wealth of surgical poetry. They are bored; the poet's

appreciation of the effect of a heavy spear on a man's ribs was professional. Spenser spent a portion of his life fighting with armour on horseback. The elaborate and prolonged carving of knights in the 'Faerie Queene' is tedious. But we read about knights with pleasure in Tennyson or Matthew Arnold, who never saw a horse except from the interior of a hansom cab."

His literary criticisms were checked by our donkeys. We again had reached a slope, down which our little charges, after the manner of their kind, went at a run. The first donkey loaded with the bed picked his way with some deliberation. The second and third, inseparably connected though reluctant, went down it at a gallop, bumping against each other like india-rubber dolls. Jack, who still nursed the fantastic ambition of being thought the Attila of donkeys, followed them with flattened ears, kicking at invisible objects. At the bottom of the hill he stopped dead, satisfied that he had spread terror around him and strengthened his reputation as the scourge of quadrupeds. He would have been disappointed to know what a look of elderly mildness he wore.

The pasture in which they were to be left we were now approaching. It had been the scene of a misadventure of mine when I first came into the country and had all a tenderfoot's misjudgment of time and distance and difficulties. There was a horse in it I wanted to get; I was at the Flying V Ranch, about eighteen miles off, from the owner of which I borrowed a horse to ride over and fetch

my own horse. It was late when I started, for the horse was unshod, and I had to shoe him all round ; the sun had begun to decline when I got to my destination, where it was difficult to find anything, seamed as the place was with little canyons, and covered with that thick brush of live oak which conceals everything. An hour of search passed before I saw my horse, grazing with two others and a black mule. He was "gentle," that is, he used to know me, and I thought I would walk up to him ; but he had forgotten me, and when I approached the group on foot, the black mule broke away and the rest followed. Instead of driving the whole bunch down into a corral at the other end of the pasture, in which I could easily have caught him, I took the foolish decision to try and rope him in the open. I chased him, but my own horse, though he tried hard, was not fast enough ; having no leggings, I got my knees and shins bruised painfully in the oak brush, and I missed the only possible throw I made at him. After hunting him and losing him again in the brush, I had to change my plan and drive them all slowly down to the corral, where I caught him easily and saddled him. All this had taken time, and it was now late in the afternoon, and what was worse, the sky had become overcast with thick clouds. I started off back, riding my fresh horse and leading the other. Unfortunately he had never been broken to lead and kept pulling on the rope, and about every half-mile threw his weight on it, stuck his feet in the ground, and stared at me with snorting nostrils.

On these recurring occasions, I had to get off and beat him, and then he would go better for a time. So the progress we made was very slow. I was a good way from the ranch when darkness overtook me, and at the same time a Rocky Mountain storm burst on me. The rain poured in torrents and the thunder rolled apparently a few yards from my ears. The darkness that fell in the woods was impenetrable, but about every fifteen seconds there would be a blinding flash of lightning. In ordinary circumstances I might have admired the sudden instantaneous glimpses of the vast spreading scenery under that light, but I was drenched, angry, and soon completely lost, for I could no longer see the trail I had been following, which was my only clue, that part of the country being unfamiliar to me. I would watch to catch sight of the faint path as the lightning illuminated everything, but the brightness was too strong, and I soon had to close my eyes at the flashes. They seemed to be playing not far from me, though I never heard them strike any trees in my neighbourhood. I still pushed on, but it is difficult to get down to the Flying V Ranch in the canyon, as there is only one ridge down which you can descend; elsewhere the sides of the canyon are sheer cliffs. I reached these cliffs and could hear the rumble of the Gila far below me. For a long time I wandered up and down trying in the dark to find the right and only ridge. But each time I found myself on the edge of an abyss, and nowhere could I see the lights of the ranch. After a last

try I resigned myself to sleeping out, though the rain was still pouring on me. Unsaddling my horse I cut my rope in two, and with either half tied the poor beasts to trees. Then arose what was really the critical question : would I be able to light a fire ? If so, I could keep pretty dry and comfortable. I was in a forest of pine trees, but the wood was so wet that I knew I had no chance of getting it to burn unless I found a piece of pitch-pine, the rich root of a dead tree, resinous, full of gum. Nothing else would kindle in that downpour. I could see nothing, however, and therefore could not find my piece of pitchpine. Now pitch is heavier than the other wood, and the richer it is, the heavier it is. In my difficulty I fortunately remembered this; so I groped about for a long time, fumbling with the broken branches and sticks that strewed the ground, and weighing each one in my hands. At last I found a heavy lump, unmistakably pitch. I took off my hat, and rasped off long shavings into it to keep them dry, and then smashed off long slithers of wood against a stump. With infinite precaution I applied a match to these shavings, placed the slithers upon them, and protecting them from the rain with my hat, carefully nursed these feeble flames. By degrees I built up a huge bonfire. I had placed it near a high rock which would reflect and hold the heat. I spread one saddle blanket by this rock, covered myself with the other, and made a pillow of my saddle. I was soon warm and dry enough, but very hungry, not having had any food the whole day since early

that morning, and not having any with me. About every two hours the fire would die out and the cold would wake me, but I would pile up another bonfire and drop to sleep again. Shortly before dawn the storm had overblown. As soon as light broke and things grew visible, I ran up to a little eminence close by to see where I was. There ran the very trail I had lost. I had slept within thirty yards of it, and if I had made one more try I would have got the right ridge. I saddled up and reached the ranch in a quarter of an hour.

## CHAPTER IX

“ I sought the maiden Solitude : she dwells  
In the untrodden, wild, and distant heights  
Amid the pine-woods and the mountain dells.  
She leaves the sandy plains and all their sights,  
The nations of the prairie dogs, the flights  
Of gorged hawks, the skulking furtive chace  
Of coyote lean. The snow-capped chain invites  
Her steps : she goes and turns her eager face  
From the broad prairie’s glare and huge unshadowed space.

The dark-eyed deer hear her approaching pace  
In the lone thickets where, in timid band,  
They crop the growing shoots. With sprightly grace  
And glancing head they leave the deep woodland,  
And thrust their muzzles soft into her hand.  
In the slim dappled creatures friends she finds,  
And they with lowered heads will patient stand  
While she with quick and healing hand unbinds  
The fur that round their horns in burning layers winds.

Her limbs are slender, delicately made,  
But in a graceful mould of vigour knit.  
Her heart is tender, but the gentle maid  
Lives in this country wild without a spirit  
Of fear ; nor is her youthful soul unfit  
For the rough uses of her mountain home,  
Beneath the icy stars alone to sit,  
To leap the stream where roaring waters foam,  
And in the spectral woods at twilight hour to roam.

Her forehead, white and high, is smoothly wrought  
With history of calm unruffled days ;  
But its too spacious breadth, surcharged with thought,  
Upon the oval of her sweet face lays  
A shadow faint, and on her features weighs,  
Till the long-fringed lids she meekly keeps  
Upon the secret of her eyes always,  
Lift slowly, and reveal the liquid deeps  
Of her mild eyes that the long, idle day-dream steeps.

I heard her trailing robes rustle and pass,  
And saw her ankles in the distance gleam  
Amid the mighty pines, whose rooted mass,  
With branches intertwined of mighty beam,  
Pillars of the cathedral forest seem.  
The floor, of needles smooth, was hardly stirred,  
When down those aisles she moved in vacant dream,  
As noiseless as the swift escaping bird  
Who, fluttering 'mid the leaves unseen, by men is heard.

She haunts the high and dizzy ledge that lies  
Where cliffs to heaven their wall of rock do raise,  
To watch the clouds that drift in sunny skies  
Like isles, and trace their headlands and their bays,  
And mountains piled in thousand various ways ;  
How th' eagle on his lonely path does fare,  
Magnificent, she views with curious gaze,  
Whose mighty wings outspread his state do bear  
Through his serene wide empire of the middle air.

Unfaltering and calm her eyes she bends  
Far down below to where the torrent leaps.  
With careful steps and firm she now descends  
Along the narrow, crumbling trail, which creeps  
Betwixt the abyss and overhanging steeps.  
Into broad, spreading vales she gladly passes,  
Where flowers of every hue she gaily reaps ;  
The regiments of blooms in brilliant masses  
Lift their tall heads and proud amid th' odorous grasses.

Pent in between the rocks the waters sweep  
Along their narrow course with rapture bold,  
Or lie in bubbling pools, transparent, deep,  
Cut in the living rock, where trout do hold  
Their games and flash their coats all dropped with gold.  
Upon this stony edge she oft will sit  
To see the stream in frothy anger rolled,  
The playful fish who quickly glance and flit  
To show their scaly skins with shifting colours lit."

I LAY at full length on the ground leaning against a pile of pack-saddles and blankets in the camp of Hay, the bear-trapper. Camp is a magnificent name, but ours did not deserve all its classical and military associations, far less perhaps than other Rocky Mountain camps; far less than a big round-up camp with a dozen cowpunchers and an imposing remuda of eighty or ninety horses. The elements of a camp are always the same—materials to sleep in, a heap of blankets in a tarpaulin; materials to cook with and food, a few pans and flour and other things; but as there were only two of us, the volume of these materials was small. In an hour it could be made to vanish with ourselves on the backs of donkeys, and nothing would be left to mark our habitation but a patch of grey ashes and a few tin cans.

We were camping on a piece of open ground which was surrounded by the illimitable sea of firs and pines, on the edge of it, under the trees. To the spring which flowed in its centre the deer came at sunrise to water, feeling no alarm, for our camp was then motionless. I used to wake of a morning, and, looking up, see the first rays of the sun striking

the ground and turning the dew to jewels ; the place became a glittering field of diamonds, and through it the bands of tall deer, with their light and graceful elegance and anxious steps, were coming and going. The scene moved even Hay, who was not very susceptible to æsthetic emotions, and he emphatically declared that whatever meat we might want we should not touch one of these.

Hay had a mule and two donkeys. I had brought four donkeys with me from the ranch, the three black donkeys, the first, the second, and the third, and Jack. For bear-trapping purposes these animals are altogether preferable to horses. They stray less from camp at night ; they are more enduring and need less care ; they do not have to be shod, and, like dragons, they almost live on air. They go slowly, and looking for bear sign you want to go slowly ; compared to them the horse or the mule is a coward and a fool, maddened even by the smell of a bear ; but the donkey carries a magnanimous heart in a grotesque body, and his generous soul despairs all bears, alive or dead, and every other beast, the wolf and the cougar, who terrify and prey upon horses ; nor will these enemies approach the dangerous little hoofs and their cool possessors. Even human beings have very little prestige with them. They refuse to do even their bidding unless their own judgment approves of it, and they persist in their refusal with an inert and almost invincible obstinacy. They have too much sense to allow man to abuse their strength as he does that of the horse, overloading

them, or driving them until they drop, or making them run at his wish. This just sense of their true interests mankind in its blindness has taken for want of understanding, and turned the name of the most intrepid and wisest of quadrupeds into a synonym for stupidity. What internal laughter must shake these little sages when they realise the folly of man !

The donkeys at that moment stood in solemn conclave in the spot where they could find the most dust, flies, and heat, and I watched them under my eyelids. They had formed a circle, and remained motionless, some with an air of distant reflection, others of deep injury. The first donkey chewed slowly at a tin can, and had almost got the label off, a tit-bit he meant to eat. Having achieved his object, which had long engrossed his attention, he became as statuesque as his companions. The second donkey at last brought his meditations to an end ; his left ear inclined itself, the sign of a momentous decision, and he moved off browsing with the others in his train. I hoped they would play together, but they were hungry and busy with some clumps of rich grass. Gradually, however, the second donkey moved into the neighbourhood of camp, where there was always a chance of finding something good, a little spilt meal, or flour, or bits of newspaper ; for a whole copy of the *Times* would have been a gulp, a mere *hors d'œuvre*, to him. On the other hand, camp was forbidden ground, and he had often been beaten for trespass. So he pretended his approach was accidental, and that he drew near

under the attraction of successive clumps of grass. But he kept a rolling eye on my movements.

He was particularly cautious on that day, for punishment had overtaken him and all his band only a short time before. There is a law, and it is a fundamental law of the race of donkeys, fixed and unchangeable, and religiously obeyed, which compels all donkeys to run away once a fortnight. Our donkeys had duly observed this commandment the day before. The little company had started off long before sunrise one behind the other, travelling without pause or digression, as fast as their hobbled legs could carry them. Failing to find them near our camp, we had taken up their trail and followed it. It was past noon when, hot, parched, and furious, we had come up to an old deserted log cabin. The tracks led straight to the threshold, and there inside were the donkeys solemnly standing in a circle. This grave and silent senate eyed each other with majestic dignity, pondering some deep decree to save the Asinine State. The first donkey alone, through a chink, surveyed us approaching in tumultuous haste. But their august attitude had availed them little. Armed with stout sticks of oak we burst into the hut with barbarian violence, and laid on right and left till our strength was exhausted. Under this outrage the donkeys had shown Roman dignity and fortitude, invariably receiving the blows aimed at their heads on the other extremity. Our fury recoiled on ourselves.

The sun had now fallen low towards the western pines, and I set out to gather wood for the fire.

The first wreaths of smoke had hardly begun to ascend when Hay appeared in sight, with his Winchester in one hand and a catch of fish in the other; small mountain trout, strung through their gills along a fork of willow.

Trapping bear is not a sport; it is not followed for pleasure; the preservation of the game is not an object. The trapper does not even care for its magnificent trophies. He is a workman employed on a ranch, though his labour, like nearly all ranch labour, is casual. On big cattle ranches regularly, and on small ranches occasionally, the foreman hires a trapper to kill out bear, wolves, and cougar, the yellow panther. Except in a few privileged and protected spots, the bear will be extinguished as completely as the buffalo within the next quarter of a century. For example, in 1901 Hay had killed twenty-nine in five months. This is extermination; for these animals, especially bear, interfere with the cattle industry, the staple of the country, and it was to find room for their cows that the Americans pushed forward from the west and east to the centre of the continent. It can only be a quarter of a century ago that the tide of cattle reached the Rocky Mountains and the habitations of the bear. Only gradually did the latter learn that the invaders were good to eat; now they almost live off them. They interfere seriously with business; in some places they make it impossible, and as in our society this is an indefensible crime, their destruction is inevitable.

Even now beef is not their entire diet, which is

otherwise most pastoral, innocent, almost Elysian. The acorns are their feast during the autumn, and on this rich food they gorge themselves. A bear will tear down a stripling oak and roll in its foliage, lazily stripping off its load of acorns. The wild grape is also a luxury of theirs which they find on the wild vine, wrapping itself in luxuriant and immense tangles round the tall trees that grow near the river at the bottom of the canyons. Only there can it find the refreshment it needs in that dry country; and though its sweetness is rather acid, we used to find it most delicious on descending into a canyon, parched with thirst after working cattle on the heights in clouds of dust, under a Mexican sun. You take a wrap round the pommel of your saddle with a main stalk of the vine and spur your horse. The whole vine, torn off, unclasps the tree and drops itself on you in a shower of leaves and fruit. It made even a ragged cowpuncher look decorative. The bear revel in the grapes, and help themselves as roughly as we did. I wish I could have seen one; it would have been a perfect picture of vigour and abundance of power and enjoyment; the very subject for a Rubens, who delights in these images, and who loves to put in a corner a row of unwieldy, shuffling elephants, loaded with harness of silk and gold; on the elephants' heads are silver baskets overflowing with the wealth of orchards. Imagine a "Garden of Eden" with a blooming Dutch Eve. The grizzlies are eating grapes in a corner; how deep and rich their fur is; what an expression of hoggish greed in their little

black eyes ; what an idea of enormous and clumsy strength in their attitude ; with what profusion the torrent of leaves flows about them. But the grapes would certainly not be the small bitter-sweet fruit we used to scrape off the stalk with our teeth, but they would be golden and large, bursting their skins, of cloying sweetness, and weighing down the stalk in large clusters. Another and most grotesque food is insects, minute victims for such monsters, and it is a disproportionate fate for a beetle to be pursued and devoured by an animal seven times as heavy as a man. But the acorn and the grape do not come till the autumn, and it is on them that he gets fat and grows his fine winter coat. When in the spring he wakes from his long winter sleep and issues, weak and thin, from his hole or cave, he pastures off certain rich flowery grasses, and the insects he procures by turning over any large stone, licking up the living colonies he finds underneath ; or he overtakes them by tearing off the brittle bark of pines. Sometimes he is systematic and turns over all the rocks on a slope. It is as if a set of children had descended from nowhere into these solitudes, and amused themselves childishly by undertaking this arduous and purposeless task ; children of giants, for a man can hardly push back into its place some of the rocks a grizzly jerks over. Like all those who labour with their bodies, he eats at all times, and when travelling hard on those long and rapid journeys in which he seems to spend his life, turns over a big stone to get a bite as he roves along. Of all bear sign the upturned stone is the

most visible, and, of course, the one that catches the notice of the inexperienced eye. It also has the peculiarity of informing you approximately how long ago the bear went by. A rock keeps the ground it lies on damp ; the degree in which the site of the stone has dried tells you roughly how long ago it was turned over.

Hay had always lived that frontier life, pursuing every kind of business. He was good-tempered, resourceful, cool, and possessed to perfection the knowledge which his life required. He knew the weather, the country, the people, the animals, the arts of camping, cooking, packing, trailing, and hunting. He was—no mean qualification for a sole companion in the wilds—the most famous and entertaining liar in the country. It was as a cook that he shone most brilliantly, and away from civilisation the culinary becomes the highest and the noblest of arts. It is not the reminiscence of feats, however prodigious, that rejoice the memory, but that of the rare and memorable good dinners. They are the real reward of heroes, and that is why Homer, the singer of heroism, fills his poem with eating and drinking. Hay could cook anything and cook it anywhere. He could make a squirrel into a palatable comestible. I have seen him cook a meal over a camp-fire, and a good one, with the rain pouring on him. The larder of a camp is flour, salt, sugar, molasses, and grease and coffee : a water-bucket, a boiling-pot, a frying-pan, and a Dutch oven, a round iron box where the bread, raised with baking powder or

in a barrel of leavened dough, "sour-dough," is baked hot for every meal into "biscuit," small rolls, by putting hot wood ashes below it and on its lid. In Hay's camp I not only tasted a greater delicacy than in cow camp, but variety both of meats and their preparation. Beef was only occasional, a piece of meat obtained from a cow outfit, and the venison we killed our regular meat. For seven cartridges, the best currency in the wilderness, we bought a lamb from a wandering Mexican shepherd, and, threading two long sticks through the ribs, held them over a glowing pile of red embers till they were roasted. We lived for days off trout, which, unlike other delicacies, never palls. They swarm in the head-waters of the streams, and Hay varied his method of cooking them as ingeniously as a chef. We killed one or two wild turkeys, big, clumsy birds, which are hardly worth shooting with a Winchester rifle, for they are shattered if you hit anywhere but in the head, and besides it was not the season for them. It is strange to hear bands of them gobbling and clucking like a farmyard on a hillside. Hay made one of the best of vegetables by boiling water-cress and the tender shoots of the wild mustard together. One of his recipes is worth recording, to cook the head of a deer or any other animal. Dig a hole in the ground. Burn a lot of oak sticks over it till there is a deep layer of ashes at the bottom. Wrap the head in wet sacking, wire it, and bury it in the ashes. Pile more oak sticks over the hole and let them burn for ten or twelve hours till it is full of

ashes to the brim. Disinter the head, now baked, with all its juices kept in the meat. He excelled at the famous Western stew made on the frequent occasions when a beef has been newly butchered, its hide skinned as if it was a buffalo robe, and, disembowelled of its voluminous interior, reduced to four heavy quarters. Tear the crackling fat from the kidneys and slice them. Slice the crisp heart and the liver, which is flabby, but gives the strongest flavours in the stew. Add lumps of meat, and anything else like rice or onions, and let it simmer till you come back to camp in the evening.

I never became a *cordon bleu* of camp life like Hay, but studying in such a school I made some progress in cookery. When I joined him my abilities were not great; in his own rather unjust phrase, "I would have burnt a pint of water if I had tried to boil it." But I made some progress. So my American travels were not altogether fruitless.

Besides having been a round-up cook, Hay had been fireman on a railway engine, a miner, a prospector for mines, a pedlar, a driver of a freight waggon, and a cowpuncher; he had invested his savings and lost them in a herd of sheep. He was a painter by trade, and now pursued the business of trapper. He was not a very good shot, though, like all Westerners, extraordinarily quick; of course he was better than I am.

Fortunately being a good shot is not required when hunting bear. This indubitable fact was a source of great comfort and confidence to me; hardly less so than the other no less indubitable

fact, that a grizzly cannot climb a tree. I can. The classical, and only possible way of killing a big bear is to be close upon him. For he is only vulnerable in the brain, throat, and neck. At a distance you cannot make certain of these points, and, in fact, are likely to hit him elsewhere, which will provoke him to charge, and will not disable him at all. For the vitality of bears is marvellous, and in their deep armour of body fat masses of lead literally embed themselves. We used Winchester 30·40's, with soft-nosed bullets. I also carried a cowpuncher's revolver.

Hunters who have "still-hunted" bears—stalked them—speak disparagingly of trapping. Unjustifiably, I think. For in a cattle country, wild animals, overfed and glutted by the abundance of meat, are very harmless ; wolves, for example, are ridiculously tame. Besides, bears have learnt to fear man ; a century ago, in the days of Lewis and Clark, they took the offensive.

Grizzly is not the right way to spell the word, though that kind of bear is grizzled and is often called silver tip ; its right name, as it was called in the days of Lewis and Clark, is Grisly, the terrible. For so they considered the monsters to be who invaded their camp and attacked them unprovoked.

But now they will always run if they can. To come upon one unharmed and untouched is, therefore, not so dangerous as it seems, but it is very different if the great beast has been tortured by the pain of a trap for ten hours. He is then mad with rage, and charges, or tries to charge

you, at sight. In any case, these big bear ought not to be killed outright at all. These creatures of immeasurable and invincible might are reduced in one instant to a tumbled heap of fur and flesh. Men should be allowed to enjoy exhibitions of their strength ; they should preferably be caught and exhibited, before enthusiastic thousands, in gladiatorial combats, though I doubt whether any adversary could be found to match a grizzly ; hardly even a tiger would face him in his wrath. Such shows, with appropriate pomp and ceremony, would be splendid. They would not be more futile than a cricket match, and far more humane than a Grand National.

This is the proper place to tell a fearful adventure which well illustrates the courage, the coolness, and the risks of those that trap the bear. Hay was trapping in the James Mountains, and had with difficulty overcome the bear he had killed, for there they still preserved that intrepidity which they once had till they learnt the irresistible superiority of man. One night he decided to camp in the bottom of a canyon where sign was thick ; evidently a number of beasts were watering there, though it was a sinister spot. A clearing had been made, and a small hut once built there by a settler. He had been killed by Apache Indians, who had dragged his stove out of the hut, lashed him to it, and roasted him to death. The little log cabin was now in ruins, but at one end of it was a bedstead of rough wood above which the roof happened to be unimpaired. Hay decided

to camp inside the cabin, and put his bedding on the bedstead, for the sky was louring and rainy. He unpacked, turned his mule and his two donkeys loose, cooked his supper, and went to bed. A low and narrow hut has little light, and it shuts out the brightness of the splendid starry nights. Now the tall trees round the hut had been left standing for shade, and they had intertwined their long arms and formed a canopy above it, so that double darkness reigned inside. In the middle of the night Hay woke up. Something was moving about the hut. He heard the heavy tread of some animal ; but it was invisible, he could not even distinguish its shape. It moved nearer, and was just above his own head ; he felt its hot breath on his own face. Putting his hand under his pillow, he slowly drew out his revolver, then fired right into the animal's face—and found he had killed one of his own donkeys. The poor little beast had come in, sniffing round to find something good to eat, a bit of stale bread or a greasy piece of paper, delicious morsels.

Our life had its routine—suppose we intended to enter a new piece of country ; to move camp usually took a whole day. We would rise at our earliest, on the very point of dawn, for our object was to finish the tedious work of packing before the sun had grown hot. We usually divided, Hay staying in camp to prepare breakfast, while I started out to fetch the mule and donkeys. On my success the success of the whole day depended, for if I brought them back soon our hours were pleasant. We packed them in the cool of the

morning : we reached our destination in the middle of the afternoon to unpack and cook our supper before the light had begun to fade, perhaps with time to catch a few trout. But the donkeys were not always stationary during the night, and it would sometimes be two or three hours before I heard the tinkling of their bells, distant in the woods. Then we would have to pack hurriedly under the full blaze of the morning sun, and we would not reach our camping-place till sundown. To arrange your camp and cook in the groping darkness, or by the uncertain light of a camp-fire, is vexatious after a laborious day. The best way to find your saddle stock is to start out to find them while it is still night, and we sometimes did this. It is, of course, the rule in cow camps, when the work must begin with the light. The "horse-wrangler" rides off to get the horses before the east has even grown pale, and begins to collect them while they are still dark moving bodies, without feature or colour ; for animals, horses even more than donkeys, never seem to travel during the actual darkness, but they stay grazing round the place they were put in. It seems, also, that the hour before dawn is the short hour for sleep among horses, those sleepless, restless animals. At the first sign of light they wake and move off, sometimes at a great rate. If you are there just before, you can find them all. Riding in the dark towards a hillside of rich grass where the horses were put the night before, you will not hear a sound; then a bell will tingle, one of the horses is

awake ; then another and another. The universal tinkling tells you that the horses are all departing, though the hillside is still black and they undiscernible.

Suppose the donkeys brought back ; then you pack them. Packing animals is an art, and a valuable art which you appreciate when you have tried to drive beasts of burden badly packed. A pack inclining to one side will give one of them a sore back in an hour, and thus disable him for a month. A pack turning over completely precipitates a horse into a frenzy. He bursts away insane with fear, kicking, bucking, rolling head over heels, scattering the load everywhere. Donkeys do the same, but more deliberately, for fear does not impel those fearless little creatures, but gleeful malice, that here finds its opportunity. You with difficulty catch your animal ; you painfully collect the fragments of your pack, finding perhaps that your flour-bag had been burst, and that therefore you will have no bread for the next few days. You carefully re-pack him. By this time all your train has dispersed in the woods, and you must rush about to find them. At length you set out again ; and at the next steep descent another pack turns, and the whole of this performance is repeated. Repetitions throughout the day reduce you to an ecstasy of rage and despair, and you also acquire esteem and regard for the man who packs well. The rudiments of the art are not difficult to learn, and allow one to appreciate the fine points—the exact disposition of the load, the even balance, the judicious situation of the large and heavy

objects, the protection of the small and fragile, the compression and adjustment of so many different things in such a small space, the many artful turns and knots of the rope which all contribute to clamp a pack as tightly and neatly on a back as if it were riveted. Four of our donkeys could carry our whole household. The others went free, though sometimes one of them would have one or two steel traps put on his back—a merely formal load.

Our direction was sometimes governed by chance information about bear and bear sign that might fall to us from cowpunchers, always inaccurate and exaggerating, or from Mexican shepherds, always instructive, but more usually we moved to a camp that Hay had occupied in his expeditions four years before. The day we moved was always one of high and confident expectations. It was always round the next camp that numerous and helpless flocks of bear were waiting to be slaughtered ; but they always remained one camp in front of us.

Our first days in a new camp were always spent searching for bear sign ; then each of us would go our own way on his donkey or on foot. The habit of unremittingly observing the ground is soon acquired in an unsettled country ; for the ground registers every event, and there is no constant perpetual stream of events to efface or confuse the sign ; they are few and remain distinct till the rain wipes them out, and to those who can decipher them they are eloquent and instructive beyond belief. Some of the indications of bear are, of course, salient. You mark how dead cattle

have been killed ; the trunks of trees for claw mark, for the smaller kind climb for fun ; where the trees have been stripped of bark ; the secret springs where the portly bear roll deliciously ; and upturned stones, the commonest and easiest sign. An upturned stone or the track of a shod horse is too common to draw the eye in our crowded country ; but see it in the solitudes. It is as startling as the human footprint was to Robinson Crusoe. I could only understand plain and direct information of this kind ; but the slightest and faintest traces were legible to Hay, and it was certainly this one of his abilities that impressed me most. All natives of that country are forced to practise trailing, and I had often seen displays of it on the part of cow-punchers, but Hay excelled. His eye was never off the ground and was unerring. In a single promenade he brought back all the news of the neighbourhood—the presence of a cow outfit, a passing herd of sheep, or a vagrant bunch of wild mares ; he announced the nearness of any game, deer, wild turkey, or wolves. He instantaneously detected any of the tragedies of animal life ; he would follow a track which he declared to be that of a colt slain and dragged down into the canyon, till we came upon the colt's bones. He marked the paths and watering-places of the deer to be used when we wanted meat. His eye had a microscopic power ; he could distinguish an old bear-track in a sandy soil trampled by hundreds of cattle. He would trail a wounded deer whose feet hardly touched the ground as she bounded

from rock to rock, at a glance, too, rapidly, not by prolonged examinations and slow steps.

This exceptional power was due, no doubt, to exceptional opportunities, for he had been a sheep-man who guards his close-packed flocks by intermittently perusing the ground around them for the steps of man or beast ; and he had lived among Navajo Indians, who can trail as no white man can ever hope to do.

I heard from him some of their legends. The Navajos had told him how they came to be on this earth, for they were not always on this upper world, but once lived in another country far below. It was as level as a plain, the sea flowed round it, and daily its tide swept over the smooth sands. The sun moved round this plain, and to pay the sun for his journey that brought the warm and cheerful light, a Navajo died every evening.

One day a certain Navajo went walking along the shore. He was an ugly man with heavy stooping shoulders, and his wife who went with him resembled him. The two found the whelp of a sea monster, a fat, small, round little animal with sleek fur ; he had crept out of the sea on his little flippers and flat tail to roll in the warm dry sand. This ugly man and his wife stole this whelp and hid him in their Navajo blankets, white, with broad red stripes, which are so good that a man can pour water into them and it will not filter through. The sea monster was queen of the sea, and growing anxious for her baby, searched for it everywhere ; searched the troubled, rolling waters and

the still, dim depths; the caves under the cliffs where the roar of the waters is never silent; the tangled forests of seaweed. The distracted creature could not find her baby, so she rolled out of the sea, bellowing and braying, to look for it. Two long tusks armed her heavy face, and her back in the waters was like a moving island. As she came out over the land a wonder happened; the whole sea in obedient order followed her, wave upon wave, overflowing the land of the Navajos. They fled before the advancing flood, but still the beast came on, roaring with grief, and the armies of tumbling waters still followed her. The Navajos hurried on, glancing back on the white and angry crests, till they were all gathered together on a big mountain; their numbers were so thick that the sides of the mountain disappeared under the press of people, and the danger was great, for already they could hear the waves breaking against the cliffs at the bottom of the mountain. So their great Medicine Man went to the top of the mountain, where there was a small open space of gravel and rock. In the gravel he planted a reed that he drew from under his blanket. Round this reed he drew with his finger a circle in the sand, and threw inside burning sticks of odorous wood from which columns of smoke slowly curled. Then he danced round the circle, flapping the corners of the blanket which covered his shoulders, over the smoke, and singing a magic song. At last the reed began to grow. It grew fast, and was soon as long as the stem of a shrub; then as a trunk of an ancient

oak ; then as a lofty tower ; and finally so high and broad that its top was out of sight. The great Medicine Man made the whole nation enter the reed, himself entering last. It was time, for the water was wetting his feet as he stepped into it. The Navajos journeyed up the dark interior of the reed till far ahead they saw a little glimmering light. As they got nearer, they saw it was an opening into the broad day. Outside it, they found themselves standing in the crater of Mount Taylor ; they scrambled over the rocks to the edge of the crater and saw the beauty of the country. There were mountains lifting their heads to a blue sky. In the woods, herds of deer were cropping the leaves. The canyons waved with grasses and tall flowers and small cool streams ran everywhere, so they decided to make it their home. This is how the Navajos came.

But the great Medicine Man, who came out of the reed as he had gone in, last, looked back and saw the sea monster flapping up the reed, growling, in search of her lost baby, with all the sea in her train. Then he ordered the Navajos to search each other, and they searched until they found the whelp, warm and sleepy, wrapt up in the blankets of the thief. The great Medicine Man ran with it to the top of the reed and threw it down to the sea monster, who sniffed at it to see whether it was her own before she lifted it in her teeth and went back down the reed, followed by all the racing waves of the sea.

The Medicine Man took the hideous grinning

Navajo with the heavy stooping shoulders, and his wife, who was like him in appearance, and drew a circle round them and made medicine round them, dancing and singing. After this he touched them both with his stick on the shoulders. They fell forward on all fours. Shaggy hair, tipped with silver, stood out all over their bodies, and, having become grizzly bears, they slouched off into the woods. This is how the Grizzly bear came.

In the beginning the Navajos lived at ease. They neither hunted the deer nor grew corn nor tended flocks; but their food fell from the sky, like snow, in soft white showers, sweet and pleasant to taste. The Navajos had no work but to weave and wash their striped blankets, and talk and dance fire dances. It happened that there was a certain Navajo who was the laziest of all the people. He was small, with a pointed face and little cunning eyes. This Navajo and his wife were so lazy that they would not take the trouble to clean their blankets by letting them float in the running stream, but were content to have them black and greasy. One evening as they sat over the fire his wife reproached him, how dirty their blankets were. He was too indolent to take them down to the stream they could hear falling over the stones, but threw a pile of the crisp, white food into a jar and warmed it till it had melted into the water he required. With this precious liquid he scrubbed his blankets. After that no more food ever fell from the sky.

The Navajos were very angry, for they had to toil and sweat, ploughing and sowing and gathering

corn, and watching flocks, and they had to spend long hours in the hot sun slowly creeping up on the deer to kill them for food. Their lives were changed from ease to labour. After a long time the great Medicine Man found out the cause. He took the small Navajo with the pointed face and cunning little eyes and his wife ; he drew a circle round them, and made medicine round them, dancing and singing. After this he touched them both with his stick on the shoulders. They fell forward on all fours. Fur, silvery white, stood out all over their bodies, and, having become wolves, they trotted off into the woods. This is how the wolves came.

In these days the country was troubled by a huge eagle, so huge that it turned the light of deep canyons into twilight with the spread of its wings when it passed over, and its shadow on the sunny hills as it flew was like that of an autumn cloud. Its eyrie was in the high, sheer cliffs, to which it carried off many Navajos in its talons, for it fed on the flesh of human beings. They were powerless against it till a Navajo was born one morning, who by the night of the same day had grown into a man. This man had power over the sun and the stars ; the clouds, the lightning, and the thunder obeyed him. One night he gathered all the black clouds of the sky together in one flock and bade them storm. The rain lashed the earth, the thunder rolled its wheels, the lightning flashed its dazzling glare. He also bade the sun halt, so that there was no morning and no day.

The eagle waited for day till it grew hungry, and then sailed out of its eyrie in the high sheer cliffs, screaming for prey. As it did so the Navajo drew down the lightning from heaven upon it, and the eagle was struck dead; by the light of the flash the Navajos could see its wings flutter and drop, and the black mass of the gigantic bird fall to the ground. Then the Navajo ordered the sun to rise; the clouds scattered and the storm ceased.

All the Navajos came together to look on their dead enemy, thronging round the body. Some wondered at the talons, some at the beak. Others argued long and loudly as to its weight and size. The women's curiosity was to see the Navajo who had drawn down the lightning; the little children dared each other to touch the bird, and those who were brave enough to do so were shaken and scolded by their mothers. The feathers of this great bird were glossy and handsome, and as soon as they could overcome their fear the women picked them and filled sacks with them, for a feather is an ornament to a Navajo. When their sacks were filled, they all started out on their way back, bowed down under their weight. What amount of attention they could spare from mutual conversation was devoted to balancing these on their backs, so that they did not notice some mischievous children slitting holes in the sacks with sharp stones. The feathers fell out, lightening the load and giving them more breath to talk. But here a wonder happened. For as each feather fluttered out it turned to a bird, each of a different

plumage, and flew off into the trees. This is the way the multitudinous race of birds came.

We never saw any Indians, but some must have seen us. One afternoon we struck a trail of our own at the sandy bottom of a canyon, and noticed that some one had been following us towards our camp. The feet were set one in front of the other, as no white man places them, and wore moccasins. Hay was very much annoyed and tried to follow this new trail himself; he might as well have tried to trail a bird in the air. Two or three days afterwards towards evening Hay was sleeping under a tree in camp, and I lay against my saddle reading, when, looking up, I saw a large patch of dry ferns about ten yards from our camp alight and blazing. I called to Hay and he immediately seized a sack and ran down to the creek, carrying his Winchester in his left hand, shouting to me to do the same. With these wet sacks we beat on the edge of the fire, which had fortunately not yet grown to large dimensions; once extinguished in this fashion round the edges, and incapable of spreading, we went on wetting our sacks and beating the patch down for an hour, till every spark was quenched, unpleasant work, the acrid smoke choking our throats and stinging our eyes. Nothing but human agency could have started this conflagration. A smouldering spark blown from the dead ashes of our camp-fire could not have been the cause, for the wind was from the patch of fern to our camp and not from our camp to the patch. We afterwards heard Apache Indians

had been on a most successful hunting and horse-stealing tour, as a gold prospector we met told us; one morning he had found his saddle stock vanished and their hobbles hanging on a bush. Our donkeys were not worth stealing. Their motive in starting this fire close to us—if they did—is not clear. Probably our presence interfered with their hunting: our traps also had the appearance of having been meddled with, which could be accounted for on the same grounds. Hay always made it a rule never to leave his Winchester out of reach, even carrying it with him if he went fifty yards to get a can of water. This caution seemed to me extreme, but in obedience to his repeated injunctions I had also adopted the habit. Unless Apaches are regularly on the warpath, which they would not presume to be at the present day, it appears they would not dare to attack an armed man even if armed themselves. For like all inferior races, their inferiority shows itself most in their not being rich enough to buy cartridges and practise. They always remain most inaccurate shots, and they cannot know whether the white is not some miraculous, lightning frontier marksman. The only danger, Hay declared, lay in their dashing in and making off with a rifle of a careless man. If he were alone and thus disarmed, they might be tempted to murder him for his outfit. After this alarm, he hugged his Winchester ten times closer. Those two Apaches may have watched each of us, themselves unseen and unheard. A woodland comedy. The two trembling Apaches behind trees,

watching me, rifled, revolvered, and armed with a still more formidable beard, speculating upon me as some deadly and ruthless frontiersman, thirsting for blood and gold: the probable train of my reflections at that time being, how hot and heavy it was lugging this armoury about with me, and whether the few cans of jam we had would last another two weeks. The imposition practised upon those guileless savages seems almost cruel.

Four years before, in the same country, Hay had noticed that his traps had been disturbed, and laid in ambush near one of them, behind a large log. On the third occasion, after watching some hours, he saw a hideous redskin, bearing a bow and arrows, naked but for a red loin-cloth, and with flowing hair, come gliding noiselessly down the canyon. When he reached the log Hay rose, covered him with his Winchester, and told him to throw up his hands. This he did in the orthodox style, dropping his bow and arrows, and opening his fingers wide; he then addressed Hay in English far superior to any Hay could command. He had received an excellent education at a school on the Reservation. After a short conversation they parted, and Hay came home, if not with a scalp, at least with an anecdote.

My expeditions in search of bear sign were not very fruitful, but they were the most delightful days I spent in the Rocky Mountains. I had always had around me that resplendent sky and sweet variety of scenery, but this was the first time I had leisure to enjoy it. Before, work or some

anxiety had always distracted me; now I could saunter, enjoy, and reflect. We were very near the summit of the Rockies, on the very backbone of the continent. The plains, dry, sandy, almost African, were now far behind us. So was the region where the profound canyons broaden to make way for large rivers, shrunk at this season to trickling streams, or where the level *mesas* (tablelands) of grass were withering under the heat. We were on the very summits. The heads of the rivers ran in little streams through amiable valleys, not yet sunk into deep and sombre canyons between towering cliffs of rock, and the cool shade of willows fringed their waters. Over their level spaces grew tall, thick grasses, sown with a profusion of flowers. These banks of flowers, mostly of a golden colour, made, with the rich green of the grasses, an effulgent livery. All round rose peaks covered by ascending regiments of pines, a dark, serried, silent army that sealed them to the very top, to the pure and serene blue of that lovely sky. Unfortunately that untrodden country has no high associations, no legends, and rouses no visions. It has no past but cattle-thieves shot, abominable cruelties committed by Apache Indians, but its scenes are of perfect and exquisite beauty.

I had always wished to be idle, with an unoccupied mind, in these woods, and this was my first opportunity; so I would spend the whole day alone, or with one of my companionable donkeys and a small book. He would carry me over the deep carpets of pine needles, through the endless

ranks of the pines to the sudden edge of deep canyons whose sides are titanic walls of red stone. I would look over and watch the river, diminished by distance to a thin, clear ribbon, flowing at the bottom of this gulf; or I would climb on foot to some untrodden, culminating height and enjoy the sight of all the mountains spread before me to the limit of sight, range past range, peak past peak, with the infinite dark sea of pines rolling over them. All these expeditions were explorations to me, and each day brought new views.

My researches were not exhaustive, though I always concealed from Hay how superficial they were. On meeting him in camp in the evening I used to find him, according to the amount of sign he had discovered, elate, breathing slaughter to the bear, or utterly dejected, pondering whether he should not abandon his present, and return to one of his former occupations, especially that of camp cook, in which he had won many triumphs and risen to be the head of his profession. Supper usually restored his philosophy to him. Afterwards I would roll on the bearskin in front of a high cheerful fire, while he sat on his heels, pulling at an old pipe and drawing equally on his imagination and his experience for stories of sudden fortune, lucky finds, or hidden treasures; or he would elaborate vast and detailed schemes by which we, in conjunction, were to win the riches he was always dreaming of, such as inventing a new hair restorer, that would raise our fame to the stars and our wealth beyond the hope of avarice.

At various periods of his life Hay had suffered from the fever of the goldseeker and was always liable to recurring fits of it. He never indeed had reached a complete cure. At likely places he would examine the formation of the rocks and look very wise over stray pieces of quartz ; and whenever we camped by some new stream, he would wash for gold, fill our frying-pan with sand from its bed and slowly shake it empty to allow the heavier metal to deposit itself in the sediment. We did not have the good fortune we deserved, and the mountains kept their treasures hidden from us. His expectations were perhaps not so fantastic as they seem, and it was a matter of certainty that gold must exist somewhere in the locality, somewhere in the head-waters of these streams. For single and stray pieces had at different times been found lower down in their course ; a man dipping his face in the water had had his eye caught by a glittering stone, and on assay it had proved itself to be half gold ; a cowpuncher cleaning out the hoofs of his horse to shoe him had found a pure piece. These tantalising facts stirred the imagination, and this secret, so in harmony with these silent and unknown peaks, invited the formation of legends. Even the prosaic Hay dallied with pictures of hidden hoards, sacred Apache treasure-houses, still guarded by their emissaries, when he talked of them ; and at times I myself yielded to the amiable idea that one morning I should stumble on a fortune. In a poor man like Hay, who has to work all his life for wages, such illusions are

more than justifiable. A miracle or something approaching to it is required to raise him to the affluence into which only a small class in our society are born. The finding of a gold-mine is such a miracle, but no other road to real wealth is more likely to be open to him, and, if he is to hope at all, there is no reason he should not flatter himself with this prospect as much as with any other. Accident would at times make his sunken hopes rise to the surface. One evening, as it was getting dark, we saw a stranger coming through the woods towards us, rather ragged, with a rifle in his hand. We had seen no other human being but ourselves for three weeks, and his sudden appearance, on foot too, was as strange as an apparition. I was by then too well acquainted with the custom of the country to display surprise or cordiality at his approach, which would be counted loss of dignity, and continued, without even looking up, at my occupation of splitting a log. Hay, who sat on his heels in front of the fire cooking some meat in a frying-pan, maintained an equal unconcern, only stretching out his left hand and drawing his Winchester closer to him. The arrival proved to be a gold prospector, searching on foot for his horse, who, though hobbled, had gone off the night before. With that free hospitality which is as much the rule as churlishness of manner, he was asked to spend the night in our camp, and after supper our talk naturally turned to his business. Far into the night the two sat on their heels in front of the glowing logs,

drawing at their pipes, to exchange reminiscences and anticipations, and anecdotes and information, all on fire with the throbbing subject. Tales of lost mines mostly. Ancient mines, worked by Spanish conquerors generations before, now lost amid abysmal canyons and inaccessible summits; old workings, with skeletons and rawhide buckets lying around, seen once by lost and forlorn travellers and never rediscovered, still guarded, in Old Mexico, with ceaseless vigilance by cruel Yaqui Indians, conscious that their discovery would be followed by the inevitable inrush of whites; veins of turquoise shown in the rocks by friendly Indian chiefs to some visitor in lonely spots; specimens of quartz picked up by geologists or travellers, and which had assayed at fabulous amount of gold to the ton; ingots of gold and silver buried by Apache chiefs in their flight after their defeat by American troops; prospectors who had returned to civilisation with rich specimens and been killed leading a large expedition back to the site of their discoveries; grotesque finds, drunkards spilling their water-bottles on the sand and seeing with astonished eyes it was rich with the golden grain—all the stories which crystallise round the exploitation of all great metal centres in the Rockies. Detailed, circumstantial, vivid accounts which they accepted as guiding facts, all the glittering will o' th' wisps that drew these men to spend the years of their lives in laborious and dangerous exploration. Words, even figures, failed Hay to describe the lordly grandeur of

the lucky prospector, who, "grubstaked," equipped by some capitalist, had at last struck it rich.

"And on one side," he exclaimed, "there was a hill of silver and on the other a hill of copper, and he got a million dollars a month from them, and he has given each of his eight children a pianner, and none of them knows how to play a note," breathless with admiration at his ostentatious luxury.

One story was rather tragic. One of the greatest of gold-mines is within a few hundred yards of the Santa Fé trail, along which thousands of people perished by hardship or through Indian attacks in the wild rush across continent to the Californian goldfields before the railroads were constructed. These unhappy creatures must have passed by the very object of their desire in their eager journey to their distant goal. Three years before this prospector himself had been engaged in a curious adventure which he related to us, where he had had the prize almost within his grasp and it had vanished.

A certain Captain Cooney, a large owner of silver and copper mines in the mountains, had been elected to the legislature of New Mexico and had gone up to Santa Fé for its sittings. There the printer to the Assembly came to him and showed him a letter which he had received from his brother twenty years before. The letter was posted from the very mining town called after Cooney, where his properties lay; in it the brother, who was a prospector, told the printer that he had found a mine of inconceivable richness, and asked him to sell his business and come out and join him, for

he required an assistant and would trust no one. He gave him elaborate and clear indications to enable him to reach his camp, which, he said, lay only three miles from this mine. Between the two he had blazed a trail, that is, marked the trees with an axe at regular intervals. In full confidence the printer had disposed of his business and come out to the West. When he reached the town from which he was to start into the mountains to join his brother, he found an Apache war had broken out. His brother he never saw again, for he could hardly have escaped the Indians; and the circumstances had discouraged him from making the attempt alone. Cooney instantly resolved to utilise this valuable information. This prospector who had fallen in with us was highly experienced and a friend of Cooney, and so he, on request, joined the expedition with the printer. The three men had started out with a small pack train, following the instructions of the letter written twenty years before, which had led them into barren withered regions, riven with yawning canyons, which would take a day to cross. At last, after an advance of many days, during which they underwent severe suffering from want of water, they reached the place, amid oak thickets and junipers, just as the letter described it. Their hearts stood still when they looked on the relics of the brother's camp, preserved during all that time in the warm dry air; the bones of the unfortunate brother lay in front of them; so did those of his donkeys, who had perished with him; the rawhide panniers,

shriveled and burnt by the rain and the sun ; the cartridges, hardly rusted, which he had used in his last defence. On the ground also were scattered fragments of quartz, different from the actual soil of the site, fragments rich in gold, as their practised eyes immediately told them, and which subsequently assayed at thousands of dollars to the ton. As a climax, they found without difficulty the blazed trail, old but still distinguishable. None of them slept that night, distracted with conflicting emotions of sadness and greed. But their investigations, carried out in the same state of excitement, were fruitless : neither at the end of the trail nor in any spot of the neighbourhood could they find any workings, holes, or mounds of earth, or even quartz similar to the specimens they had found in camp : and after searching for days, they had resigned themselves and given up their quest. The prospector offered us his explanation of their failure. It was, he said, a ruse of the Indians, bent, as always, on hiding the existence of gold in their land, knowing that the most sacred obligations, the most solemn promises, the most formal treaties could not keep the white man out of their country if it was discovered. They, he alleged, had thoroughly effaced the traces of the workings, and of the original blazed trail which led to them from the camp : and had even taken the trouble to blaze another false trail on the trees to mislead any people who had any information of the discovery : he even thought they might have shifted the bones and relics of the discoverer

from his right and original camp to where they had been found, to make doubly sure of the secret. One small fact supported the hypothesis of a deliberate deception. Cooney, with the quick and intensely observant eye of his kind, noticed the trunk of a small tree bore very old marks of having been burnt. Scraping away the earth at its base, he found the ashes of a small fire that had once been lit there. Some one had exerted himself to conceal this mark of a human visitor.

If bear sign was old or scarce, we moved on to another camp, and if it was fresh and promising, we set our traps out. They weigh seventeen or forty-two pounds, and consist of two large steel jaws which, by a simple and common mechanism, are released and closed when a pan in the middle of the trap is trodden on. To the trap you attach a log weighing sixty or seventy pounds, which does not of course retain a grizzly, but it is an impediment. He rushes off across country hauling it. This drag of log and trap catches in every bush ; he halts at intervals to gnash his teeth on them ; best of all, they leave a deep, broad track, and you can follow him easily. On other occasions he stays on the same spot, raging. The placing of our traps was sometimes settled by peculiar circumstances, but, as a rule, we set them out at distances of a mile or so along a ridge or on the edge of deep thickets. From a ridge the scent of the bait is carried in two directions, and far ; besides, a long ridge is a favourite road along which bear travel. Thickets are a constant inci-

dent of the woodlands, where firs and impenetrable groves of quaking aspen grow close together, centuries of fallen timber obstruct the ground, and a thick brush knits the whole into an impervious jungle. They are the favourite residence of the bear, for men do not enter them. They are cool too, and bear, who cannot discard their rich fur coats, must suffer acutely from the heat of a Mexican summer. They certainly stay in the thickets all day, and only come out of them at night. I can imagine the great beasts lolling and panting in the deep shade at noon.

A bait for your trap is supplied by deer, so that this hunting of deer is almost constant. We depended upon them also for meat. Half a deer was the bait we hung up in our traps. Killing deer has been praised as a noble sport; but I found it dull enough. Perhaps it was satiety; perhaps I have never had that love of the rifle which possesses those who are skilful with it, as much as the love of their swords possesses the heroes of romance; perhaps the deer were too easy victims. Hunters by no means given to bravado, and somewhat sceptical about sporting exploits, write with more complacency about their destruction of black-tail and white-tail deer than of any other animal. But it is difficult to understand, as it does not seem to demand high qualities or present great difficulties. But perhaps this case is not usual, and peculiar to this country, owing to the deer being familiar with men, and yet unmolested and secure. Cowpunchers are always riding about among them,

who hardly turn their heads to look at them, for they dislike venison and disdain sport; in fact, in one range where the cattle were very wild I believe they were easier to approach than the cattle themselves. On one occasion a cowpuncher and I were driving a few cattle up a small narrow canyon. Two does came down it towards us, and almost walked into the lead of the cattle, perhaps dazed by the light and not distinguishing us on horseback from the cattle. They were coming so near that I saw the cowpuncher silently getting his rope ready to rope at them. These casual meetings and views of deer are reminiscences far more pleasant than those of hunting them, and possibly the worst way of seeing deer is to stare at them along the sights of a rifle; but a large buck surprised at a forest pool, where he has come to drink at the hot mid-day, and lifting his black muzzle, still dripping with water, to look at you, is a picture very pleasing to the eye.

We left the carcase, or more usually half of it, at the place where we intended to set the trap, and on the next day we brought the big steel traps themselves. The most curious requisite of Hay's was perfumery, of the most powerful kind. He used it to extinguish human scent, the slightest touch of which warns a bear and will alarm him unless he is very hungry. We scented the soles of our feet before treading round a trap; we scented our hands before touching a trap or bait; we scented the sides of our legs to leave no warning on the branches that brushed against us.

Unkempt and ragged as we were, we trailed odorous clouds behind us, and from our humble camp ambrosial airs, whispering of roses and lilac, were wafted through the woods. Hay declared scent is as much an attraction to bears as sugar and sweets. He also possessed a chemical preparation, about the ingredients of which he was very secret and mysterious, and which he used to scatter round a trap. It smelt pleasantly of ginger-bread, fresh from the oven, and he declared that with this chemical bait alone he had caught bear, without any meat.

To set the trap Hay chose a small clump of trees or big bushes growing close together, and inside this he tied or fixed the half carcase of the deer. He fixed and tied it firmly, for otherwise some small beast like a wild cat, snatching at it, might draw it out. Then he connected the stems with a barricade of sticks, poles, foliage, and brush, making a firm fence through which a bear would not be inclined to break, but in this barricade he left an opening. If the smell of blood, carrion, and perfumery allured a bear, he would see a rich meal hung up and an open passage to it. In this passage Hay dug with our little axe a shallow hole of the required shape. A little chain, with a ring at the end of it, hung to the trap. Hay cut a sapling down, pared down one end and slipped the ring over it; into the same end he neatly drove a little wooden wedge to prevent the ring slipping off again. The trap itself was still closed. Cleverly using his feet and a rope,

he pressed down the powerful springs and opened out the monstrous jaws, large enough with their grim iron teeth to catch and hold the foot of an elephant. With precautions, and very slowly, we lifted the trap into its place. The drag was dropped and concealed in the brush that formed the fence. Earth and leaves were artfully disposed over the iron machine, and the ground where it was buried was made to present an innocent surface.

Some practice is needed before you can set a trap with perfect correctness. Set it too deep, and earth will clog and block it; set it too high, and the iron will emerge to frighten the bear; too slight a pole is not a sufficient drag; too heavy a pole breaks the little chain, and the bear leaves the country with your trap on one of his paws; omit to put a twig under the pan, and a small rodent—a skunk—will spring the trap by stepping on it; the huge jaws close above the skunk's head, and he scuttles off unharmed. As in all matters of action, there is a liability to a number of small errors, each small but each fatal.

I was very unlucky about bear; or perhaps, considering my marksmanship, fortunate. When I joined Hay he had killed two in the last week; one a big grizzly who had carried the trap four or five miles. Hay had followed him up; his first shot had hit the grizzly in the chest, the second broke his back. He was a boar, and had been fighting rivals so furiously that his skin was quite damaged, torn everywhere by their claws and tushes. Only the back was intact, which Hay had skinned, and

I used it as a rug during my stay in camp. He said that the deep layers of fat and flesh on him were black and bruised from the smacks his adversaries had given him. Perhaps no man ever watched the onset of two boar grizzlies; but if ever any one has, he must have seen the most tremendous duel of the world of animals. This beast, for example, must have been six times as heavy as a man, and I imagine could break the neck of a bull with one bite. The other bear Hay never killed at all; she committed suicide! involuntarily, I must say. Her body still lay where Hay had found her and she was not worth skinning, for, having been dead a considerable time, her fur had slipped. Any fur appears to moult off within two hours of death. She was very fat, and maddened by the torture of the trap she had run herself to death. I had the curiosity to follow the track of the poor beast. She had dashed up a steep hill, rolled down into a canyon, raced up another precipice, tearing through bushes and brakes, knocking down saplings in her frenzy. Going down the next slope she died suddenly, though I do not know from what precise cause. Hay, on finding the trap gone, had tracked her with extreme caution; hearing no bellowing, he feared she might try some ruse. He advanced slowly and with circumspection. As he peered over the ridge down the slope where she had died, he saw her lying under a bush a few yards off, asleep as he thought. Dropping on his knee, he rapidly and courageously planted two bullets in a dead bear.

I brought Hay misfortune, as the next five weeks were blank, and yet we were always close upon the bear. They seemed to march in a scattered company, each member of which lives singly, but the troop invade or retreat from a country simultaneously. We always just missed reaching one of these impis, and our nearness was most tantalising. Sometimes their sign cannot have been more than a day or two old. Once, when we were at the most lofty and inaccessible point we reached, into which the most energetic foremen never sent their cow-punchers, we came upon the very place where several bears must have hibernated in holes and caves. They have a curious trick while they are still living in their winter quarters, during the early spring, of always setting their feet in the same spot as they leave and return to their holes. Their tracks grow as deep as ruts; worn tracks of this kind were all round the peak in great numbers. A week or two earlier we would have walked straight into the little hive. Another time we had got off our donkeys by a little spring, in a narrow dell of the woods. On both sides of the dell the thickets grew tall and thick, and it was evident that a bear had been digging at this spring and rolling in it, though not lately. We were eating a little piece of cold bread and meat we had brought for lunch when we heard the branches cracking in the thicket far above us, and the unmistakable "Wough! wough!" the asthmatic pant the bear makes. At the same time our donkeys began walking off down the dell, not hurriedly—for I do not believe these

magnanimous animals would deign to show panic—but as if they had suddenly remembered an appointment at some distance. We ran after them to get our rifles, but the bear had gone off on finding us at his spring. It was a disappointment to have the object of our search so near, and yet invisible and inaccessible.

The wet weather which had marked the whole of that year was very unfavourable to me; it was the cause of a very abundant crop of acorns. Consequently the bear found their staple food everywhere very plentiful, and indulged their taste for rapid and constant travel; they flitted through the mountains, but made no prolonged stay: in a dry year, when acorns can only be found round a few, damp places, they are compelled to stay round about them. It was certainly the proper country for bear; for it was where Hay had hunted before when the ranchmen who employed him had paid him their bounty on twenty-nine head; in spite of this slaughter they had subsequently suffered so much from their depredations that they had been compelled to take him into their service again. Later in the year I hunted them again in a different fashion but with the same blank result, owing to the same circumstances. For ten days I rode to bear-hounds, and if we had only been able to find I should certainly have enjoyed a sport for which the word royal is inexact and weak, for it is not within the reach of kings. There are only a few packs in the world, and one of them, belonging to a Mr. Lyons, came into our country. He brought

with him a pack of hounds, rather like foxhounds, but with slightly different colouring, larger ears, lower bodies, and, I imagined, far less pace, hunted by a gaunt and aquiline Mexican and his whips. The principle of the sport is to put them on the trail of a bear ; they run him till they bay him, and the first of the field to come up shoots him if he can. It thus combines the interest of hunting with horse and hound to that of big-game shooting, and must be unimaginably exciting. The bear does not run far ; the gross beast is too obese in the autumn, and even to save his life can only go, vomiting, for a few miles ; then he waits on his haunches for his pursuers, with the pack yelping round him. But he is hard to follow, because no natural obstacles arrest him. If he reaches the brink of a cliff he rolls down it, as he does down all declivities, and he will climb up anything except a smooth over-hanging rock. Mr. Lyons' outfit was on a great scale, appropriate to the dignity of the sport : a large remuda of superb horses and many Mexican servants, besides the Mexican huntsmen ; immense tents to sleep in, and a whole *batterie de cuisine*. Moving from one spot to another with the pomp of a little army, it swept round a great circle of country in three weeks without finding, though bear sign was common enough. I and two of my friends joined it for some time, and though we got a good deal to do—hunting to feed the hounds and ourselves, and looking for bear sign—we never enjoyed a run.

After the five unsuccessful weeks with Hay I

found it necessary to ride to town with a mule to bring back food, and for my letters. Town was ninety miles away, and I returned to Hay only on the seventh day. To my intense vexation I found he had killed five bear in the interval. In his own language, "he had got in among them"—met one of these vagrant bands. Three were small black bears, two large brown ones, one of which had a fur of deep orange-golden brown. He had caught them all at the same trap, resetting it day by day. The spot looked like a shambles, strewn with putrifying carcases, the reek of which poisoned the air around. The fate of the first bear he had caught, a little black one, was curious. While it was caught in the trap presumably the other two big brown bears had come along, and had eaten it and the bait. It is possible that it was still alive, and that they had killed it. Its bones were there, picked clean, broken, and scattered in the usual bear style. This cannibalism was irritating to Hay, for he was paid a fixed amount for each scalp he presented. Now so much of this bear was buried in the stomach of his fellows that only a fragment of the scalp was left, and Hay was doubtful whether it would be honoured.

At my return the bear again disappeared. The rains set in earlier than usual and heavier, which spoilt the pleasure of living in the open air. Besides, the ground was turned to mud, and twice we found it had clogged the springs of our traps and they had failed to act; each time the bait had been torn out and there were marks of great teeth

where the backbone of the deer had been broken in two. We were on the point of moving out of the country. Our traps were strung out along a ridge and we had visited them and decided to take them up on the next day. But on our way back to camp we found a perfectly fresh track. At one point in the path the whitish trunk of a cotton-wood tree lay across it. Going over it the bear, presumably a grizzly, had smudged the mark of his paw upon it. The print was very clear-cut and enormous, the paw being muddy and the bark offering a white surface. Across the ball of the foot it was as broad as my hand is long, from the tip of the middle finger to the wrist. But it was too late in the afternoon for us to take the trail up.

The next day we visited two of our traps, but our giant was in neither of them. The third lay in a little open glade on the edge of tangled and intricate thickets. As we entered it we saw a brown head peeping at us over a bush. Listless and half-asleep as we were, the high and pleasurable excitement mounted to our brain, in a flood. It was a brown bear. Though it was as heavy as Hay, it must still be called a cub, for it had come there with its mother, cubs staying with their mothers till they are more than two years old. It was quite gentle, and stared at us in mild astonishment. I suggested trying to take it back to camp, but Hay rightly refused. So I took the small axe and broke the skull of this innocent. It seems murderous, but our position was far from secure, for in cases like this the mother usually hovers round in a

fury and rushes back when her child cries. At any moment her charge was to be expected, and while we were skinning the cub, Hay jumped every time he heard a branch crack in the thickets. A she-bear robbed of her cub is almost as formidable as she is supposed to be ; and in this case she would have had the great tactical advantage of charging us from the upper ground or being invisible in the bush till within a few yards of us. There had been terrible scenes of wild anger all round the trap, and the whole affair could be re-constituted. There was another cub as well as the mother. Next to the trap there was an ancient pine as broad and thick as the column of a cathedral, rising high above all the trees. We conjectured that the other cub had run up to the top of it, terrified at the report of the trap closing, for it is like the noise of a pistol. The mother exercised her fury on everything round, knocking down saplings right and left, and tearing at the larger trees, but the trap itself was undisturbed. The big pine was the special mark of her anger. She had clawed it all round ; the bark had been torn off in long strips, and it was scored with long scratches. She must have climbed to the top of it, perhaps to catch the other cub and cuff it, for she-bears relieve themselves in this fashion as petulant nurses do on unoffending children. In any case, the limbs and arms of the pine lay in voluminous heaps round its base, like those of a mast shot off in battle. But she did not return either then or at any other time.

The young fellow we had caught had been naughty, and the story of his disobedience and its consequences would no doubt become one of the traditional tales of all bear nurseries. His fate was the punishment of his bad behaviour. A cub is not often caught, for when a mother bear approaches a carcase, she leaves her two whelps at a distance and inspects it carefully in person. The children sit by on their haunches, with their fore-paws drooping, looking very foolish ; if either approaches before the inspection is finished the mother cuffs him heavily, and one of her blows can knock him right over. This young fellow had disregarded the safe rule on seeing a tempting piece of deer hanging from a tree, and with careless infant mind had stepped into the trap. In one of his many previous experiences Hay had once caught and killed a she-bear and captured her two little cubs. They were quite small, and the harmless, furry little things had remained playing their childish games round the trap which had caught their mother. Hay had taken them in his care ; he had made two rawhide bags into which he put them to travel in, allowing their heads to project from the mouth. These two bags he slung like panniers on the back of an old donkey, and in this fashion he carried these adopted creatures down into civilisation, squealing. He had ultimately disposed of them, and they had had an unusual fate. The owner of one determined to place him in a Zoo in the East ; so he had sent him by American parcel post, the Wells Fargo Company, imprisoned in a

small wooden cage. The infant bear had grown in strength and independence, and the train had not gone far when he burst the bars of his cage and issued from it, to the surprise of the Wells Fargo agent in the car, who climbed out and took refuge on the roof. During the rest of the journey the young bear occupied the interior as his private car, undisturbed by the presence of any other traveller, and searching the parcels for sweet things. The other cub had been purchased by a saloon-keeper who kept him chained on his premises for the amusement of his customers. Under their tuition he developed a taste for alcohol, and even learnt to knock the top off a beer-bottle and drain it of its contents. The appearance of such an intelligent and human characteristic in a wild animal attracted universal attention, and crowds flocked to see him perform this feat. To satisfy public curiosity he had to take to drink, and soon rivalled the most noted toppers : his capacity was enormous, and his parents having gifted him with a strong constitution, there is no knowing to what lengths he might not have gone. He might even have overthrown the established superiority in this respect of man over the animals. But his remarkable career was cut short. One day in a state of intoxication he fell on the jagged point of a broken beer-bottle, and inflicted a fatal wound on himself. It was an appropriate and not unbecoming end to a manful life.

One of the haunches of the bear we cut off to eat; it tastes like young pig. The fat we reduced, for it

is excellent for cooking, as rich as butter, and made our bread taste like pastry. The rest of the body we hung up as a bait; gruesome, but there is none better for old boar bear, who are always trying to eat their young. This is the reason why the cubs stay so long with their mothers. In spite of my suggestions, Hay, obstinately careless, refused to tie the bait to the trap and inserted it loosely in the forks of a tree. My prognostics were fulfilled. A big bear, presumably the one whose track had been so neatly marked on the log, hooked it out without springing the trap. We found the body picked quite clean, and broad tracks, effaced by the rain, all round. My patience had been taxed by days and nights of incessant rain, and sleeping in a wet bed had drawn on it heavily. At this mishap it ran out completely. I parted from Hay, and drove my donkeys back to the ranch.

## CHAPTER X

THE date of our departure from Diamond Hearts was approaching, and Belphœbe and I were wandering to have a last view of the beautiful lone scenery, walking along the flat heights of the mesa from which the long ridge swept down far below, with the canyon. At that distance the ranch had sunk to the size of a toy, made of little logs, and the boisterous creek was diminished to a thin silver thread. Belphœbe leant on my arm, and neither of us spoke: our senses were taken up with the vernal delight of the morning. At last I asked—

“Is it to-morrow, or the next day, that Reinhold is leaving to go back to Germany?”

She did not know. I almost looked upon his departure as a riddance. His eloquence, in spite of its originality and learning, wearied me; his company was a strain, and we could never unbend to the level of exchanging ideas and commonplaces. He exposed theories, and invited argument; and discussion with him was like battling against a stream, fatigue without progress. Besides, it had grown rare for him to even admit dialogue into conversation. He almost invariably preferred to indulge in monologues, of which he was the speaker and I the audience. The native dog-

matism with which he made his statements was provocative, and it was enhanced by his rather harsh, guttural accent ; and he had little regard for the prejudices of his audience. Altogether I had come to consider him rather boorish. Even his stories had lost their attraction. They were too long, and he relished their relation too much. An anecdote should trip off the tongue with a run and pointed finish. His dragged on through interminable windings and lengths. Belphœbe looked up at me, and with sure instinct guessed my thoughts. She asked—

“Do you think he talks too much ?”

Thus put to the touch, I replied—

“Really, at times I think him intolerable.”

Belphœbe had an inveterate aversion to discord, and her efforts were always directed to remove it in the seed. She exerted herself to allay the irritation which the acuteness of her soft heart warned her existed between her two friends.

“He is really very interesting, isn’t he ?” she said. “He must be very clever : I’m sure I do not understand half he says.”

I laughed at this testimonial : but she continued—

“I’m sure he is very kind too. He took an awful lot of trouble getting that poem for me, which he is going to give me : what was it ?”

Reinhold had said a few days before that he had seen a poem in the *Amphipolis Advertiser* during his residence at Amphipolis which he thought Belphœbe would like. Considering this to be a hint,

she had asked him to get it for her, and he had entered into a correspondence for that purpose. I answered—

"Oh, that poem; why did you give him the trouble to get it? it is not likely to be anything much, out of a local newspaper. Probably a rhymed advertisement for a patent medicine. However, there may be something in it; and at least he said it seemed to be by an Englishman."

We stopped to look at the landscape, now bathed in a soft benignant light. Pointing out far down the canyon, I said—

"Look at that little old cloud over there. We may have a storm before this evening."

A huge black cloud, single and alone below a cloudless sky, was slowly moving up between the steep black sides of the canyon, like a ship between two fortresses, discharging volleys of white hail. We stared at this phenomenon.

We were interrupted by the noise of some one approaching, and turned round to see Reinhold's sturdy form clambering towards us. He reached us and waved a piece of paper—

"Here is your poem," he said cheerfully. "It will just suit you two."

Belphebe accepted it and replied—

"Thank you very much: but I think you ought to read it to us."

I took the piece of paper from his hands and proposed we should first sit down, and we found a piece of dry rock warmed with the mild sun which shone over the mountain side. As Reinhold panted,

I asked him about his arrangements for leaving, and offered to help him to drive his two pack mules to town. Turning over the crumpled newspaper slip on which the poem was printed, I saw a column of base-ball news and said—

“I really believe Americans are keener about games than we are.”

Reinhold had by this time unfortunately recovered his breath again : this remark started him like a machine, and he burst into a harangue.

“As far as my own observations go, the only real occupation of Anglosaxondom, and its most definite tribute to civilisation, is games of ball. To these all ages and sexes devote themselves, with feet and with hands, with instruments of different kinds, with balls of different shapes and sizes. The making of money or friends or families is subsidiary to this main object, a mere gathering of fuel for the fire. Their ambitions centre in a ball, a lawn tennis, a real tennis, a racquet, a squash racquet, a fives, a hockey ball. The red cricket-ball is the dream of his boyhood, the white golf-ball the consolation of his old age. Football offers the cis-atlantic Anglo-Saxon two great and splendid genera and a rich selection of minor species, not to mention the great transatlantic game. Patriotic antiquarians have revived the bowl and the skittle ball. The croquet ball is a gallant acknowledgement of the existence of the weaker sex. Asia, the ancient, has yielded him the polo ball, and America, the new, the lacrosse and the base ball. The real scientific distinction between cis-atlantic and

transatlantic Anglo-Saxons is that one plays cricket and the other plays base-ball. Ingenious and benevolent men, fearing the natural games of ball might become exhausted, have invented new artificial ones, the push, the basket, the vigoro ball. The real danger did not lie in that direction. The outdoor games were flourishing : it was the absence of any great national indoor game of ball that was ominous. Millions were and are thereby condemned to periods of enforced inactivity. Some but not altogether satisfactory attempts have been made to supply this want, and under their own roof they need never be quite idle. But they have to content themselves with the billiard, the bagatelle, the pool, the pyramid, the spriopol, the skittle jack, the pirouette, the ping-pong ball. None of them can be called successful or adequate. There is no need, however, to be despondent : a great indoor game will ultimately be found, and the national enterprise be prosecuted by night as well as by day. As a final expression of Anglo-Saxon genius, cricket has been elaborated into a game, the like of which is not to be found in universe or time, a game which lasts three whole uninterrupted days. Unshackled by tradition, younger British nations like Australia refused to be confined by temporal limits of any kind, and with the constant improvement of pitches and batting there is every prospect that the game will be extended so as to occupy a calculable section of a man's life.

"It would be unjust to call these pursuits only relaxations. For the leading and master classes

they are the real, if not the sole, method of education. The student's ability in them is a mark of worth to his fellows, and of moral goodness to his master. Great and wealthy foundations established for academic purposes, have been successfully adapted to national needs and brought into harmony with the national temper. To propel a ball with force and accuracy gains youth the admiration of his fellows, the favour of maids, the approbation of elders. It is the standard of virtue, the social passport, the training of officers, the guarantee of business success and of professional eminence. I remember that the leading organs of public opinion sufficiently explained the appointment of Mr. Alfred Lyttelton to the rank of Cabinet Minister by his skill as a cricketer. It is the real subject of popular interest, as your press shows, and the importance of public life is trivial in comparison. Its greatest exponents are the national heroes. The laurel grows neither for the victor or the poet. Fame lies in the mouths and ears of men, and let all names be hushed at that of C. B. Fry.

"Here again I anticipate a new religion, though it has not yet been quite formulated. The best of all rites, as you know on high authority, is adoration pure: and if constant thought, deep veneration and enthusiastic practice make up a belief, these balls have a great number of believers and are nothing less than a creed. Mothers invoke this spirit for their children, strong men are sustained and guided by it—"

Here Belphœbe, who had been listening to him with mild eyes, said—

“I do not believe you really think these games important. You are only making fun of them, aren’t you?”

Reinhold looked at her calmly, and said in a rather arrogant tone—

“We Germans cannot compete with you there, we prefer other fields of achievement. We are willing to acknowledge your athletic supremacy, and you, I hope, acknowledge ours in the whole province of thought. You do unconsciously, I know. Your philosophy is the idealism of Hegel : your scholarship, as far as I observed it at Oxford, relies on the studies and texts of the Germans. The great mass of scientific researches is made by us and borrowed by you. The great studies in the origin of the Bible, the sacred book of Christianity, were made by us during the last century and taught to you : we can claim modern religion as our creation. The history not only of our own but of every country has been written by my countrymen, and they were the first to explore the origin of even your institutions ; no country can show historians of the calibre of our Mommsens and Gierkes. All the musicians except a few limping Latins and Slavs, are ours. I heard no others in your country : and if we do not excel in the other arts, it is because we neglect them, it is because our real strength does not lie in the sphere of thought, though in that sphere we so unquestionably lead and

surpass all others. It lies in the province of action.

"Too long did Germany remain dreaming while others were doing. But now it is in the arts of government that the world has become our pupil. War, the crucial test of nations, and all its multiple preparations, can only be learnt from us: our armies are the models all endeavour to copy. In a day or two we can put two or three million trained men in the field. The officials, imperial and municipal, of our States are effective and capable as no others are. Next to them your public authorities seem inert or non-existent, and as much behind ours as Moroccan Kadis are behind them. They give our masses protection and assistance such as no others enjoy. Besides the ordinary work of government, they do for them almost gratuitously what the individual capitalist does elsewhere at a huge price. Our officials can run railways at a large profit. They can conduct for the benefit of the whole public the enormous business of insurance against fire, accident, old age, invalidity, and even worklessness—which even your insurance companies cannot do. For the employee they find an employer; they give him legal advice gratuitously, one of the great needs of the poor; they find him work; they find him houses; they even act as pawnbroker. They multiply devices to protect that huge blind giant, the people, from his thousand parasites, devices which your statesmen have not even heard of in their insular ignorance and prejudice. Our leaders

had fully established a complete system of education for us, elementary, secondary, academic, general and technical, half a century before yours had begun even to think of the subject, and yours have not come even now to a final decision. Legal institutions are to a nation what bones are to man's body, the framework, without which neither strength nor growth are possible. We have lately had a Code presented to us which, according to your own great authority, Maitland, puts our law a century in front of yours. How can you question our superiority? Almost every year a Cabinet Minister of yours comes over to us to inquire into the methods of our departments: I have never heard of any of ours going to you for any purpose, except to acquire information about thoroughbreds. With all these advantages, which we owe not to accident but to ourselves, it is not surprising that we add a million to the number of our citizens every year, and that our commerce in a decade or two has almost caught yours up, in spite of its long start.

"There can be no doubt of the position in which these forces will place us in the course of the century. Other States will become our clients, and revolve round us as satellites. We will found an Empire to unite west and east. By a system of railways we will connect Amsterdam and Bagdad, Trieste and Hamburg. The Rhine, the Danube, and the Euphrates will bear their wealth to the German or Germanised populations on their banks. The Atlantic and the Mediterranean and Indian Oceans will wash our shores and bear our count-

less fleets. Our glories will surpass the Roman, for we shall enjoy the double supremacy of culture and government. We will carry the light of European civilisation in one hand and the sword to defend it in the other. Who has a better claim to do so than us? We alone can think and breed and rule and fight.

"Only two obstacles stand in our road, the vindictive hordes of the Slavs and your wealth. But we have crushed the Slavs under our heels before, and will do so again. And the mountains of British gold will crumble at the touch of Teutonic iron."

"Don't you be so sure, my dear fellow," I was compelled to reply, at this aggression.

"How," he retorted—"how can the result be doubtful? Our national leaders are professors; your national leaders are sportsmen. Do you expect ignorance to overcome knowledge, and the laws of this world to be reversed in your favour?"

This remark made it impossible for me to avoid engaging in a controversy in which I had to undertake a part I was not capable of playing.

"My dear Reinhold," I said, "your civilisation, if you will allow me to say so, admirable as it is, is rather too new a growth. Sudden development is exposed to sudden arrest. A century ago you were hardly a nation at all, hardly even in sentiment. You had no government, no army, no administration, no law, no finance, no industries, no commerce, no wealth, and you had almost forgotten your own language. We were not very different from what we are now, and if we have not

covered the same distance in the interval, our continuous growth in the past gives us some hope of an equally continuous growth in the future. In reckonings of this sort an addition of material advantage only is misleading. All the factors are not concrete in this kind of calculating. You do not estimate at very proper value the long and not discreditable history of a people. Our unity, accomplished so long that we forget it, gives us secret sources of strength. Centuries of common action have endowed us with treasures of endurance and devotion which cannot be measured. Balance-sheets cannot be published of these resources, or departments formed to develop them, but they exist, and you should not omit them in forming your prophecies. We have repelled together all kinds of attacks. You can hardly have the same confidence; though I am not well informed, I believe Germans have fought together but once, and that lately, and with much difficulty. How will your Colossus behave when, in the struggle your prognostics anticipate, he is properly grappled; when the Slavs, who, though more barbarous, have more vitality, and the Latins, still superior in civilisation if inferior in vitality, clasp him round the middle and our sea power takes him by the throat and chokes him? Besides, the novelty of your position gives you other inconveniences which we escape. Long enjoyment has made us accustomed to an important position: thus we escape the notorious evils of arrogance and unscrupulous ambition, and in our relations with other States are not grasping

and insolent. This good fortune of ours should be put down to our account in your calculations.

"You hardly do justice to our institutions and their real strength. You must excuse their apparent chaos and jumbled antiquity. The constant pressure of neighbours on our frontiers is unfelt by us, the wall of the sea intervening to diminish or destroy it. As long as this water is there, our dangers and risks must seem remote. Consequently we do not study the methods of rivals, we are not compelled to adopt their reforms, most of which remain unknown to us, or inflict painful and sweeping changes on ourselves. Ensconced in our quaint and comfortable institutions we renovate them piecemeal, at our ease, hurting no one, and unaware of and indifferent to their irreconcilable inconsistencies, their baffling variety, their inextricable confusion, and their unintelligible antiquity. We have had the misfortune always to be secure and safe, and still remain in the same unlucky position. But we have compensations; in our isolation we have an opportunity of developing our institutions in a fashion different to others, for we are not constantly forced to imitate. For this reason it is difficult for you to appreciate their value. They are singular, and for that very reason the ordinary standards you bring cannot be applied to them. We, and we alone, have created and used a home-made system of law, and have not, like others, borrowed it wholesale from the Romans. Our economic and fiscal system is peculiar to ourselves, and perhaps exactly ad-

justed to our peculiar conditions. If we cannot array a nation in arms, we have invented a unique colonial army to perform the duties our special colonial situation in the world requires. Representative institutions have not been worked uninterruptedly or successfully anywhere but in our island : our Parliament is the recognised mother of parliaments, and few of her children are as active and robust as she. There is thus an intense originality visible in our political arrangements which may well be symptoms of great national strength ; perhaps as clear signs of power as the impressive spectacle of your scientific and modernised organisation. The sight of our easy-going and slack attitude contrasts unfavourably with yours, armed, alert, constantly prepared, and forging new arms, defensive and offensive. But we have never been otherwise ; yet in the crisis the designing mind and the heroic arm have never failed us ; and in peace we have accumulated a huge population and immeasurable wealth on a small island, lost in fogs and cold, hanging at the flanks of Europe. Our colonies——”

Bancroft Library

Reinhold interrupted me.

“I cannot understand your pride about colonies : you govern black men well, as in India : these are conquests, not colonies ; you cannot do anything with whites. You have bungled all your enterprises ; you have been eight centuries in your colony Ireland, and it still remains hostile. Your prosperous colonies, and so far the only ones which have grown up into a great nation, have

left you and become this huge country. You are crabbed, you do not mix easily, you cannot amalgamate with your French in Canada or your Dutch in South Africa. You are, I think, the worst people in Europe at absorbing other races. Look at the French ; they have Gallicised completely the large pieces they took away from Italy less than half a century ago. Besides, your colonial empire, such as it is, is after all entirely in the future ; at present it is all failures or all prospects. So far you have accomplished nothing definite. The white men's settlements you possess have only begun to grow and are barely striplings ; the ties that bind them to you may well be thrown off when they are full grown, for they are light and loose."

"It is the lightness of these ties," I retorted, "that makes their strength, for these nations can choose their own road under our dominion. As in any other dependency their choice and their direction would be controlled, they will be reluctant to enter it. They will never want to throw us off who can give them protection and exact no dependence. If dreams of Empire are to be indulged in, ours might seem more legitimate. All the fairest spots of the other continents are inhabited by English or Anglicised populations, and there are no unoccupied places left to others but swamps and deserts. As their destiny is to increase and multiply, their career of power will be peaceful, and to pursue it they will not have to overcome a host of enemies or carry out vast schemes of

conquest. Their growth, if it takes place, will be natural."

Reinhold shook his head.

"The people of your thalassic empire will always be heterogeneous and disunited. The English cannot Anglicise, that is evident. Look how little homogeneous your own island is, and how Scots and Welsh preserve their own identity, differences of a kind that are innocuous at home but dangerous abroad."

To which I answered—

"You forget what an instrument of conquest our language is, which uniting irresistible grammatical simplicity with a literature of surpassing richness, can and does extirpate all others. Our culture is as effective a means of government as any other, even as blood and iron, and your misapprehensions regarding it are natural and quite explicable. We lie rather outside the main flights of ideas which circulate easily from one Continental country to another, but which do not fly across the Channel easily. Those which do survive the crossing, arrive rather late and do not diffuse themselves easily among the masses of the nation or even in the small circle of intellectual people. You notice their absence, and it misleads your judgment. But here again this insularity, and the Philistinism it may produce as a penalty, has its gains. If the great masses of the nation care more for sport than for the things of the mind, our culture, which within a narrow circle is as intense as any other, has an originality far greater.

It develops by itself, so in speculative, both scientific and philosophical, and imaginative fields its achievements during the last century are at least equal to yours, not to carry the argument farther back, which would be unfair, as before that date you had no existence. If I knew more about it I could refute you more thoroughly, but it seems to me Spencer's and Mill's influence over philosophy and all its practical applications has not been equalled. In spite of your prodigious efforts, the greatest discoveries in the field of science are ours, and Darwin has at least affected religious thought as much as any one else: theology must deal with him as well as with Tübingen. This is not going far back, and I omit the long ages when you had not yet emerged. Perhaps it is merely my want of knowledge that makes me ignorant of the names of any great German painters, though we have had great masters quite lately; but the monuments of your literature, new as they are and untried by the test of time, are trifling compared with ours. So if we cannot be as systematic as you and point to such schools and barracks, we can show the most incomparable body of poets and sailors, for on the sea and in the imagination, elements which demand individual genius, we are everybody's masters."

Reinhold was unbeaten and was gathering himself for a retort, when Belphœbe, who thought there was some acrimony in our talk, said—

"I wish you would stop shouting at each other and read me that poem you had brought out to me."

Reinhold took the newspaper cutting from me and answered—

“Very well, I will : some of the sentiments fall in with our argument. It is an epithalamium.”

He read with expression but an unmelodious voice—

“First let us both together go  
And live our lives alone : I know  
A lonely mountainous retreat,  
Of solitude the chosen seat.  
I will be your tender guide  
To show you vales and paths untried.  
Through the thick willows there's a way  
To waterfalls all foam and spray,  
That tumble down with noisy shock  
To pools cut in the living rock.  
When pitiless the fierce sun beats  
In the high midsummer heats,  
I'll lead you to the stony brim  
Of the deep waterholes, where swim  
The circling shoals of silvery trout  
And wheel and turn and dart about.  
While on the slippery edge you stand  
For safety I will hold your hand.  
After the day of heat and haste,  
The coolness of the night we'll taste,  
And watch the coming of the dark  
Together : how from the faintest spark  
Each star will grow to glittering light ;  
How full and clear the moon to-night  
Will be ! Over that Eastern hill,  
All black and high, her chariot will  
Come driving from her palace door  
And o'er the dark her brightness pour.  
Sometimes we'll climb the rocky height,  
Ere the first point of morning light,  
Watching the summer night grow pale:  
The splendid host of stars does fail,

## A THREE-FOOT STOOL

But still their leader's light does beat,  
The last to move in the retreat,  
As yesterday at evening time  
He was the first, alone, to climb  
Over the summit of the hill.

And at the season due you will  
Ride out with me when every bough  
Carries its winter's weight of snow.  
As underneath our way we make  
The leaves above you'll seize and shake  
And laugh to see the heavy shower  
On my wet face its burden pour.

The soft and snowy carpet spread  
Muffles our horses' careful tread ;  
We'll find the hoof of a young doe  
Printed on the glittering snow  
As if a chisel skilled and light  
Had cut in level marble white.

Just before the rising dawn,  
At night's darkest, with her fawn  
Down the hillside she came to drink ;  
Timid she stood there by the brink  
And gently bending took her fill  
Of the turbid waters chill.

When this mountain life grows stale,  
To seek the town we will not fail ;  
We'll look down from the wooded height  
On the great city shining white,  
Where I have often looked alone  
On that vast plain of glittering stone.

To farthest verge of earth the eye  
Can see, under the cloudless sky,  
Bridges with graceful arches bold,  
Old towers and spires and domes of gold ;  
Lordly palaces and fair,  
With echoing court and stately stair,  
With gallery and balustrade ;  
Triumphal arches, by him made  
At whose mere name, as once his word,  
The feverish roll of drums is heard,

Regiment after regiment  
Rise up, with eyes upon him bent,  
A field of ordered bayonets,  
With whose flaming points he sets  
His trophies up in every clime,  
Mightiest head of modern time !  
A sudden flight we then will take  
To an Italian, crystal lake.  
The steep and grassy shores around  
With column'd palaces are crowned;  
With blazing lights their windows glow.  
Our little boat across I row  
At night : the towering mountains cast  
Their shadows on that surface vast.  
The terraces and gardens dip  
Their stairs of marble to the lip  
Of lapping waters : we moor our boat  
Where spreading water-lilies float ;  
Violins and their waltzing hum  
Across the level spaces come,  
And the night breeze upon its wings  
The scent of orange blossoms brings.  
Then to take ship to see the Rock  
Whose guardian only can unlock  
The gate and roadway of the East.  
To watch the land we have not ceased  
From the ship's rail : look at the coast,  
For every cape our fleets can boast  
A victory : close to that bay,  
Upon a famous distant day,  
While ship with ship in grapple locked  
And heaving decks with battle rocked,  
Triumphant, the simple hero died  
Who gave us our dominion wide  
Of this and every other sea.  
Still ours may these waters be,  
And may in time of need again  
Our iron forts that swim the main  
To hostile fleet and hostile shore  
Speak once our will, and speak no more."

After he had stopped Belphœbe remarked—

“That is very nice. Thank you very much. I like that part about Gibraltar and Nelson especially. Tell me, I am very stupid, what is an Epithalamium?”

THE END

# SMITH, ELDER, & CO.'S PUBLICATIONS.

2ND IMPRESSION.

Demy 8vo. 10s. 6d. net.

## HENRY W. LUCY'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

With a Portrait Frontispiece in Photogravure from a Painting by  
J. S. SARGENT, R.A.

## SIXTY YEARS IN THE WILDERNESS.

### SOME PASSAGES BY THE WAY.

By HENRY W. LUCY ('Toby, M.P.' of *Punch*).

*THE TIMES*.—'An autobiography of the frankest and most candid kind. . . . A remarkable career, the details of which are told simply and unaffectedly . . . full of anecdote. . . . It is all very clever and very vivid.'

## THE BISHOP OF NORWICH.

With Portraits and Illustrations. Large post 8vo. 7s. 6d. net.

3RD IMPRESSION.

## A BISHOP IN THE ROUGH.

Edited by the Rev. D. WALLACE DUTHIE. With a Preface by  
the Right Rev. the LORD BISHOP OF NORWICH.

*DAILY TELEGRAPH*.—'Fascinating from beginning to end. . . . We recommend no one to miss this most entertaining volume.'

Crown 8vo. 3s. 6d. net.

## THE IMMORTALS' GREAT QUEST.

By the Rev. J. W. BARLOW, Ex-Vice-Provost of Trinity  
College, Dublin.

*CONTEMPORARY REVIEW*.—'An astonishingly clever book : clever in its conception of a Utopia, still more clever in the vividness with which this strange Hesperian world is brought before us.'

2ND IMPRESSION.

Crown 8vo. 6s. net.

## THE WANDER YEARS :

Being some Account of Journeys into Life, Letters, and Art. By  
J. H. YOXALL, M.P., Author of 'Château Royal,' 'Alain  
Tanger's Wife,' &c.

*DAILY TELEGRAPH*.—'This fascinating and uncommonly human volume of essays. His impressive pages are stamped with the seal of a keen individuality, and abound in a tender charm which is sure to attract a very large and intelligent company of admirers from all classes of the educated community.'

3RD IMPRESSION, 2ND EDITION. Small demy 8vo. 7s. 6d. net.

## THE MEANING OF MONEY.

By HARTLEY WITHERS, City Representative of 'The Times.'

*FINANCIAL NEWS*.—'There can be no doubt that Mr. Withers's book will supersede all other introductions to monetary science . . . readers will find it a safe and indispensable guide through the mazes of the money market.'

London : SMITH, ELDER, & CO., 15 Waterloo Place, S.W.

# 6/- RECENT FICTION. 6/-

'THE SUCCESS OF THE SPRING SEASON.'

## ARAMINTA.

By J. C. SNAITH. 4TH IMPRESSION.

*SPHERE*.—“Araminta” bids fair to be the most talked-of novel of the hour . . . the best novel of 1909 by a long way.’

*LIVERPOOL DAILY POST*.—‘So joyous a novel rarely comes our way . . . its dialogue is uniformly brilliant. . . . The very atmosphere of the book is sunshine and joy.’

---

## TERESA.

By EDITH AYRTON ZANGWILL. 2ND IMPRESSION.

*TIMES*.—‘Teresa, simple and affectionate, extraordinarily ignorant of the world, clings to the reader’s heart. . . . Some of the scenes are original and striking.’

*MORNING POST*.—‘A story full of surprises and full of interest. Teresa, the heroine, is really a triumph. . . . Mrs. Zangwill has scored a success.’

---

## THE STORY OF HAUKGARTH FARM.

By EMMA BROOKE. 2ND IMPRESSION. [*In the press*.]

*TIMES*.—‘A beautiful and touching story.’

*LIVERPOOL DAILY POST*.—‘For intense power, boldly used, “The Story of Haukgarth Farm” takes high place. . . . Miss Brooke has given the world a revelation of the Westmorland of the middle of last century.’

---

## GEOFFREY CHERITON.

By JOHN BARNETT. 2ND IMPRESSION.

*TIMES*.—‘We have laid the book down with the liveliest feeling of regret that now we cannot read it for the first time.’

*GLOBE*.—‘A man who writes such a book as this ought to wake up and find himself famous. Decisively original, his book charms.’

# **6/- RECENT FICTION. 6/-**

## **DIANA MALLORY.**

By Mrs. HUMPHRY WARD.

Fifth Impression (Third Edition). Over 90,000 copies sold.

From the *LIVERPOOL DAILY POST*.—“Diana Mallory” is a great book, great in the charm, correctness, and restraint of its style, great in the fascinating skill with which its story is unfolded, great in its swift and dazzling flashes of portraiture.’

## **CATHERINE'S CHILD.**

By Mrs. HENRY DE LA PASTURE. Second Edition.

*SCOTSMAN*.—‘Some of the best qualities of the work of the author of “Catherine of Calais” are revealed in “Catherine’s Child.” It exhibits her genial yet shrewd philosophy of life, and the simplicity, combined with strength, of her style and the charm of her humour.’

## **WROTH.**

By AGNES and EGERTON CASTLE. Second Impression.

*DAILY TELEGRAPH*.—‘The splendid gift of straightforward narrative which Mr. and Mrs. Egerton Castle employ so skilfully sweeps away all sentiment but that of spell-bound interest.’

## **ROUND THE FIRE STORIES.**

By A. CONAN DOYLE. With a Frontispiece. Second Impression.

*DAILY TELEGRAPH*. ‘Sir Arthur has here collected such of his short stories as deal with the weird, bizarre, and supernatural; and who among living novelists can excel him in this particular form of literature?’

## **A PAWN IN THE GAME.**

By W. H. FITCHETT, B.A., LL.D.

*DAILY TELEGRAPH*.—‘A book to be cordially recommended, both to those who enjoy a good story and to those who enjoy adventure.’

London : SMITH, ELDER, & CO., 15 Waterloo Place, S.W.

# **6/- RECENT FICTION. 6/-**

## **THE GREEN PARROT.**

By BERNARD E. J. CAPES.

*GRAPHIC*.—‘Mr. Capes’s work is delicately carved and finished. Here, as always, it has distinction combined with the strength of originality.’

## **THE HOUSE OF THE CRICKETS.**

By KATHARINE TYNAN.

*GLASGOW HERALD*.—‘Katharine Tynan cannot touch a character but it lives. In our opinion “The House of the Crickets” is by far the best novel she has yet written.’

## **A SHROPSHIRE LASS AND LAD.**

By Lady CATHERINE MILNES GASKELL.

*STANDARD*.—‘Lady Milnes Gaskell has returned to the “Proud Salopia” that she knows so intimately and describes so well. . . . These “Episodes” are described with much natural force and charm.’

## **TORMENTILLA: or, The Road to Gretna Green.**

By DOROTHEA DEAKIN.

*TIMES*.—‘It is a friendly, pleasure-giving picture of country social life and, indeed, something more, for all the types have character, and the talk is full of real humour.’

## **THE WOUNDS OF A FRIEND.**

By DORA GREENWELL MCCHESENEY.

*WORLD*.—‘That spirited and imaginative writer of historical romances, Miss Dora Greenwell McChesney, has given us a picturesque and powerful story.’

## RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

# BIOGRAPHY AND REMINISCENCE.

### LORD HALIBURTON.

A MEMOIR OF HIS PUBLIC SERVICES.

By J. B. ATLAY, Author of 'Sir Henry Wentworth Acland: a Memoir,' 'The Victorian Chancellors,' &c. With a Portrait. Small demy 8vo. 8s. 6d. net.

*OUTLOOK*.—'Lady Haliburton was well advised to place the record of her husband's public work in the hands of a skilful and judicious biographer like Mr. Atlay... the late Lord Haliburton represented the very spirit of the War Office. . . . That he was a distinguished and devoted servant of the State was unquestionable.'

### MEMORIES OF HALF A CENTURY.

A RECORD OF FRIENDSHIPS.

By R. C. LEHMANN, M.P. With a Photogravure Frontispiece. Demy 8vo. 10s. 6d. net.

*DAILY NEWS*.—'What a pageant of names Mr. Lehmann marshals before us . . . great and distinguished men each talking in his own person about big and trifling affairs! Mr. Lehmann succeeds in giving us a sort of portrait gallery.'

### THE LIFE OF MIRABEAU.

By S. G. TALLENTYRE, Author of 'The Life of Voltaire,' 'The Women of the Salons,' &c. With a Photogravure Frontispiece and Half-tone Illustrations. Small demy 8vo. 10s. 6d. net.

*EVENING STANDARD*.—'It is racyly written and makes good reading.'

### BLACKSTICK PAPERS.

By LADY RITCHIE. With Portraits. Large post 8vo. 6s. net.

*STANDARD*.—'Memories of Thackeray himself colour nearly all these sketches of men and women, with many of whom he was in one way or another connected. . . . A volume full of gracious memories, kindly discourse, and gentle criticism.'

### RECOLLECTIONS OF A LIFE IN THE BRITISH ARMY DURING THE LATTER HALF OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

By General Sir RICHARD HARRISON, G.C.B. With Illustrations. Demy 8vo. 10s. 6d. net.

### PERCY: Prelate and Poet.

EDITOR OF THE 'RELIQUES OF ANCIENT ENGLISH POETRY.'

By ALICE C. C. GAUSSEN, Author of 'A Later Pepys' and 'A Woman of Wit and Wisdom.' With a Preface by Sir GEORGE DOUGLAS, Bart., a Photogravure Frontispiece and 7 Half-tone Illustrations. Small demy 8vo. 10s. 6d. net.

*EVENING STANDARD*.—'Bishop Percy has been fortunate in his biographer. . . . Miss Alice Gaussem has brought to bear upon her work a great deal of tact and charm. . . . her biography achieves the important end of making its subject a living person.'

## RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

# TRAVEL AND HISTORY.

### **ON THE COROMANDEL COAST.**

By Mrs. F. E. PENNY, Author of 'The Inevitable Law,' &c.  
Small demy 8vo. 10s. 6d. net.

*DAILY NEWS.*—'Mrs. Penny does not come forward in this book as an interpreter of India. Her attitude is consistently that of an interested outside observer. Her book is quite out of the beaten track of Anglo-Indian literature. It deserves praise both as an entertaining and an instructive piece of work.'

### **THE STORY OF MAJORCA AND MINORCA.**

By Sir CLEMENTS R. MARKHAM, K.C.B., F.R.S., Author of  
'Richard III.', 'King Edward VI. : an Appreciation,' &c.  
Small demy 8vo. 7s. 6d. net.

*MORNING POST.*—'The story of these Islands, which has not been told before in the British language in a condensed form, fills a gap in the history of Mediterranean countries.'

### **CHÂTEAU AND COUNTRY LIFE IN FRANCE.**

By MARY KING WADDINGTON, Author of 'Letters of a Diplomat's Wife.' &c.  
With 24 Illustrations. 8vo. 10s. 6d. net.

*TIMES.*—'Madame Waddington's easy conversational manner is well suited to the personal reminiscences of French social life which she here gathers together; and the attraction of the book is much enhanced by excellent pencil drawings of social scenes and landscapes.'

### **THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE TORIES.**

**FROM THE ACCESSION OF CHARLES II. TO THE DEATH OF WILLIAM III. (1660-1702).**

By C. B. ROYLANKE-KENT, M.A. Demy 8vo. 12s. 6d. net.

*LIVERPOOL DAILY POST.*—'A writer of painstaking research and very polished style. In "The Early History of the Tories" Mr. Kent is at his best, and not merely confirms, but also enhances, a reputation already won for work well and thoroughly done.'

### **THE MAN OF THE MASK: A STUDY IN THE BYWAYS OF HISTORY.**

By Monsignor Barnes, Chamberlain of Honour to H.H. Pope Pius X. Small demy 8vo. 10s. 6d. net.

*MORNING POST.*—'Monsignor Barnes has gone into the historical records for himself, and has propounded an ingenious theory as the solution of the mystery of the "Man of the Mask."

*T. P.'s WEEKLY.*—‘Messrs. Smith, Elder seem to have put into most successful practice the old maxim that bids us mix entertainment with instruction. And sometimes the instruction turns out to be more entertaining than the entertainment.’

## THE ORIGIN OF THE SENSE OF BEAUTY.

By FELIX CLAY, Architect. Author of ‘Modern School Buildings, Elementary and Secondary, &c. Large post 8vo. 6s. net.

*SCOTSMAN.*—‘An interesting, suggestive, and well thought out treatise, which should be read with profit by anyone curious to find an intellectual explanation of his likes and dislikes.’

## SELECTED SPEECHES. With INTRODUCTORY NOTES.

By the Right Honourable Sir EDWARD CLARKE, P.C., K.C., Solicitor-General 1886-1892. Author of ‘Treatise on the Law of Extradition,’ &c. With a Portrait. Small demy 8vo. 7s. 6d. net.

*TIMES.*—‘Many of them are excellent reading: they rivet the attention. This is particularly true of the forensic speeches. The political speeches are even more conspicuous by the manliness of tone and courage which have marked Sir Edward Clarke’s career.’

## MEGGIE: a Day Dream.

By LADY ALGERNON PERCY.

With Eight Full-page Illustrations by F. D. BEDFORD. Crown 8vo. 6s.

*GENTLEWOMAN.*—‘The child is a true child, and the dream world the authoress weaves around her is the right world for children.’

## PRESENTING THE CASE FOR WOMEN SUFFRAGE.

## THE HUMAN WOMAN.

By LADY GROVE, Author of ‘The Social Fetich.’

Second Edition. With a Vignette Title-page. Demy 8vo. 5s. net.

*DAILY TELEGRAPH.*—‘A seasonable and admirably reasoned contribution to the burning question of the day, “Votes for Women.” . . . This book should be widely read and studied by all. It is admirable in temper, and solid in logic and argument.’

With Facsimiles of Five Authentic Autograph Signatures of the Poet.

## WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: Player, Playmaker, and Poet.

A REPLY to Mr. GEORGE GREENWOOD, M.P.

By the Reverend CANON BEECHING, D.Litt., Canon of Westminster, Preacher to the Honourable Society of Lincoln’s Inn.

Second Edition. Crown 8vo. 2s. net.

*SCOTSMAN.*—‘Dr. Beeching’s handling of Mr. Greenwood and his “case” is most masterly and yet perfectly fair.’

*DUNDEE ADVERTISER.*—‘Canon Beeching examines Mr. Greenwood’s “case” in a way that will delight all anti-Baconians.’

## POEMS.

By J. GRIFFYTH FAIRFAX, Author of ‘The Gates of Sleep, and other Poems.’

With a Silhouette Frontispiece. Crown 8vo. 4s. net.

*DAILY CHRONICLE.*—‘A Rising Star of Song—this little book shows him to possess a genuine poetic gift, which, if it develops progressively, should win him a high place among the singers of our day.’

# WORKS BY ARTHUR C. BENSON, C.V.O.

Large post 8vo. 7s. 6d. net, each.

## **AT LARGE.**

SECOND IMPRESSION IN THE PRESS.

*DAILY CHRONICLE*.—‘This is, in its way, the most frankly personal of the “Benson books” as yet published. It is all graceful, soothing, and pleasant—the very book for tired minds in a nerve-racking world.’

## **THE ALTAR FIRE.**

SECOND IMPRESSION.

*WORLD*.—‘In conception and in execution this study of a high-souled but inveterate egoist, converted to humility and altruism by the discipline of suffering, is an achievement of rare power, pathos, and beauty, and, so far, incomparably the finest thing that its author has given us.’

## **BESIDE STILL WATERS.**

THIRD IMPRESSION.

*DAILY CHRONICLE*.—‘“Beside Still Waters” gathers together the scattered threads which have been already introduced into several of Mr. Benson’s more recent studies; it consolidates his attitude in life, and gives full expression to his mellow and contented philosophy.’

## **FROM A COLLEGE WINDOW.**

THIRTEENTH IMPRESSION (Fourth Edition).

*DAILY GRAPHIC*.—‘One of the most delightful books of the year.’

*LONDON QUARTERLY REVIEW*.—‘Will be read again and again with eager interest.’

*GUARDIAN*.—‘We have nothing but praise for Mr. Benson’s book.’

## **THE UPTON LETTERS.**

FOURTEENTH IMPRESSION (Second Edition). With a Preface.

*DAILY CHRONICLE*.—‘If anyone supposes that the art of letter writing is dead, this volume will prove the contrary. . . . Altogether this is a curiously intimate and very pathetic revelation.’

Large post 8vo. 6s. net.

## **THE GATE OF DEATH: a Diary.**

THIRD IMPRESSION (Second Edition). With a New Preface.

*SPECTATOR*.—‘A very striking book. . . . The story of a dangerous accident and a long convalescence is so told as to take powerful hold upon the reader, and it is difficult to lay the book down.’





